

HAWTHORN COTTAGE;

OR,

The Two Cupids :

A TALE,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY J. JONES.

VOL. I.

*Sic teneros animos aliena opprobria sæpe
Absterrent vitiis*—————Hor. Lib. I. Sat. iv.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE prevalence of Female Seduction in an enlightened age and Christian nation, confined (as it is generally found to be, *mediately* or *immediately*) to those classes of society whose refined modes of life and education may be supposed calculated to dignify and exalt the mind, and to soften and humanize the heart—the prevalency of this vice, considering its serious and dreadful consequences to the seduced,

especially in instances of abandonment by the seducer, and which is, perhaps, the more general result, would appear *presumptively* impossible, as a means of *human gratification*, did not the daily records confirm the melancholy truth, and with it, alas too often!—its wretched consequences.

In contemplating this most pernicious vice we are ready to exclaim—The Satyr is not fabulous—is not fiction! although, as a reflection on man, it is disgusting to humanity.

On what do we found our pretensions to superiority above the brute creation?—On our reason, under-

standing, and judgment—in other words, on our capability of reflection, prospection, and their inferences.—To what then are we reduced by this vice! For can a man in the progress of seduction reflect on what the amiable object of his pursuit *is*—can he look forward and contemplate what she *will be*—when he has effected his brutal design?—he cannot—for the inference would shock his humanity beyond his possibility of purpose.

That it is a vice in itself revolting and disgusting to a rational mind, is too generally evident to stand in need of argument—but its distressing con-

sequences are so various, and so conclusively fatal, that to exemplify them, however inadequately as a representation of *reality*, would confer honour on a more able head or more effective pen.—It is the cause of the father, the mother, the sister, the brother—it is the cause of general humanity, when we consider the horrid train of vices to which this one is often inductive in the seduced, and which, though too shocking for display, may be summed up in three words—a *Woman without shame !*

And who is the object of this noble kind of conquest?—In general, some

poor confiding girl, in the outset of life, with passions new and warm, her heart susceptible, her ear open to insidious flatteries, ignorant of the world, and often without a guide or protector!—Should protection follow, her character is lost!—if abandonment, it is *infamy* or *death*!

Take my money—the loss may be reparable.—Seduce my daughter or my wife, and where shall I look for compensation! My hopes, my plans, my prospects, my comforts, are irretrievably gone!—Such would be the consequences more immediately my own: my fears for *them* can be but

faintly formed by an imagination happily uninfluenced by any personal experience ; still fainter would the conception be in others from a description so imperfectly derived ; but that the heart of many a parent, many a husband, has been broken by the accumulated sorrow and anguish inflicted by this opprobrious vice, will be easily believed by those who have at all attended to the passing events of their own time.

The same sacred Decalogue that prohibits theft and murder, forbids adultery and the coveting our neighbour's wife, daughter, or servant—and

so pure is the Christian comment on these interdictions, that who but looks on a woman with *desire* offends in his heart—what then does he who not only looks at, but plunges the object of his illicit cupidity into the very gulph of vice and misery, and involves in wretchedness a virtuous family, of which she was once, perhaps, the pride and ornament!

But the seducer is an honourable man still—he may pursue his *game*, and marry—may marry, and pursue his *game*!—and still be honourable—the world will give him countenance, laugh with him at his *amours*—and if,

perchance, the *infamy* of a victim reach his ears—"She's a d——d pretty girl!" (d——d, indeed!—and by whom?) is the passing observation—if her *death!* his half-awakened conscience shrinks to the subterfuge of—*some other cause.*

Oh, curst Seduction! Bane of society! Destroyer of domestic peace! what ravages dost thou make in the moral world! -with what poisonous weeds dost thou over-run the *garden* of the human creation—and how often do we see the fair lily or the blooming rose, infected by their pestiferous, their blasting influence, droop its

lovely head, blighted ere its beauties
are matured!

I was, some time ago, on a visit to a friend in the country (whose father was rector of the parish), with whom I had been a fellow-student; and, as our manners and habits of reflection were in a great degree similar, we were accustomed in our walks to exchange our sentiments on general observations; among others, I, one day, started the subject of Female Seduction as a theme of discourse.

“ You have long,” said my friend,
“ been in possession of my sentiments

on this subject; and as they have always accorded with your own, excepting a little difference in the warmth of their delivery (for, were I a despotic prince, I think I should hang every scoundrel whose criminality of this kind could be proved, provided the consequences were irreparable), therefore we will change the subject:—it, however, brings to my recollection my father's late curate, a very worthy man, the peace and happiness of whose family had been utterly destroyed by one of these reptiles in the form of a soldier. The curate has been some years dead; but he had written down

his sentiments on this subject in the shape of a novel, though the greater part of his matter was founded in fact, and in the course of his work had briefly stated his own unfortunate experience of its consequences, I had occasion (or rather made it) to call on his widow the other day, to whom, in respect to the memory of her late husband, my father affords a little occasional assistance, and I found her taking what she termed her *cordial*; it was a desultory view and perusal of her husband's papers; and that it was, indeed, a *cordial*, evidently appeared in her eyes, which were filled

with tears ; among these papers she turned up those which constituted the work I have just mentioned ; but as the expense of their publication would have been beyond his means, they had been, latterly, she told me, neglected, and accidents of one kind or other had detached and destroyed many parts of them ; but that which related to the misfortune of his own family was entire, and if you are not disinclined we will look in and request the perusal of it.”— We did so —and having taken a hasty glance at the manuscript, and being flattered by its congeniality of sense and spirit

with my own sentiments on this *modish* vice, I requested permission of the widow to take it home for perusal, to which she readily consented, allowing me the full right of disposal—a right which I exercised in supplying the mutilated passages, and giving a regular connexion to the whole—and conceiving it may be found in some degree worthy of the public eye, I respectfully submit it to its superior discernment, presuming that in the mind of the moral and humane reader the correspondent tendency of the work will atone for the faults and imperfections of its execution.

✎ Although the sub-title of “The Two Cupids” would, to the classical reader be sufficiently intelligible, it may be necessary for the information of the less learned, to observe that, according to the ancient mythology, there are *Two* Cupids: one the fabled son of Jupiter and Venus—the other of Nox and Erebus; the distinguishing spirit of which the Author has attempted to exemplify in the course of his moral and familiar story.

PREFACE.

“ SOUS quelque forme séduisante qu'on puisse présenter la Morale, on y trouvera toujours un fond d'austérité. Il est possible d'écouter avec plaisir une leçon salutaire, d'en sentir l'utilité ; mais jamais on ne la reçoit avec transport : ainsi, de semblables Ouvrages, plus solides qu'attrayans, ne sauroient exciter l'enthousiasme de ceux mêmes qui les goûtent : on les loue avec plus d'estime que de chaleur.

Quels sont les admirateurs de l'Auteur donc? Tous ceux qui conservent le goût de la vertu. Quels sont ses ennemis?—Tous les gens sans principes et sans mœurs. Le nombre pourroit effrayer ; mais après tout, ses détracteurs les plus ardens n'oseront jamais dire qu'un Auteur dont la morale est d'une irréprochable pureté, soit un *Auteur méprisable* : tandis que la raison équitable & sévère, regardera comme tel, malgré les talens mêmes, l'Ecrivain malheureux qui risque de corrompre ses lecteurs."

Such were the sentiments of a truly excellent and amiable French Au-

thoress ;* and thus cautioned and encouraged, the Author has ventured, in this enlightened age and nation, on the production of a Moral Tale. It has no pretensions as a tale of wonder. It has neither moated castle—usurping baron—midnight bell—mouldy scroll—human skeleton—bleeding ghost—or blood-rusted dagger, to present—materials which, however ingeniously displayed—to what effective end? To afford to the indolent a time-wasting book—to the vicious a mirror, that, in these our polished times and manners, can never (as is

* Madame GENLIS. *Les Deux Reputations.*

necessary, to be effective) reflect their guilt in its familiar costume.

The Author is aware that in the choice of his subject he has risked his interest (as commonly understood), and probably his reputation as a Novelist, in preferring to the fascinations of horror, the uninteresting cause of virtue.—Who needs to be told that virtue is commendable, and vice detestable?—Who needs to be insulted by such common-place information?—All know it—but all are not influenced by their knowledge!—Too many there are who listen to it as to a tale thrice told—and turn aside to

the allurements of the voluptuous goddess and her licentious train—till they become spell-bound to an insidious and surprising ruin!

What then does the Author propose to himself?—The possibility that, however he may fail in attempting the reformation of vice—he may succeed in the encouragement and confirmation of virtue, by reflecting her amiable image, and rendering her more conscious of her charms.—Such is the desired end of his humble labours—though nothing can be less probable than that he will be ever conscious of his success.

HAWTHORN COTTAGE

A Tale,

IN THREE PARTS.

PART I.

CHAP. I.



ON the border of Scotland, but on English ground, uniting in his character the manly virtues of both nations, lived Sir George Emersly, whose steady attachment to the interests of his sovereign during the rebellion in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifteen, had acquired him much honour and emolument ; which, toge-

ther with his virtues, descended to his son and heir, Sir William Emersly.

This gentleman having spent several years abroad, in the service of his king and country, with a grateful remembrance of the obligations they had conferred on his family, returned home, and shortly after married a lady of distinguished wealth and beauty.

But, unfortunately, these were her most valuable endowments! — “The love of pleasure and the love of sway” were never more predominant in any female breast than either was in hers — the consequence of the latter passion was, a constant opposition to the will of her husband — the result of the former, a rapid degradation to licentiousness. Too late was Sir William aware, that the vagrancy of pleasure is the

general concomitant of extraordinary wealth and beauty—too soon was he convinced that the hope of engrossing what the world adores is vain!

By this lady he had two sons, William the elder, and Henry a year younger, who were scarcely sooner born than consigned to the care of a foster-mother, that the pleasures of the lady might not be interrupted by the duties of the parent.

Sir William had long witnessed, and seriously lamented, the erratic disposition of Lady Emersly—he had found entreaty and remonstrance equally vain; and, despairing ever to conciliate her scattered affections, fell a prey to the inward chagrin her dissolute conduct continually induced.

As Sir William had always been re-

gular and provident in the management of his concerns, there was little trouble in the arrangement of them after his death. He left to his lady conjointly with his brother, Mr. Thomas Emersly, the execution of his last will; though this appointment, with respect to her, was merely to preserve her consequence in the eyes of her family, of which, as he left her the mother and the mistress, he justly conceived that his confidence would be necessary to ensure to her their respect."

But neither the loss of her husband nor the cares of her family could long restrain the volatility of her disposition; her affections were again all abroad, and cards, routs, and balls, the decided objects of them.

To the influence of such example, and the total neglect of parental admonition, was too often added, with respect to the young baronet, the protection of his thoughtless mother from the forbidding frowns and necessary chastisement of his moral tutor—the wanton destruction of insects, and the torture of creatures more capable of resistance, gave early indications of that cruelty and cowardice which so generally mark the vicious character—as his years increased, his offences magnified!

Her youngest son Henry was placed with his uncle, Mr. Thomas Emersly.

This gentleman had been left, with a younger brother's portion and his own merit, to establish himself as a merchant. An unremitted attention to

business had enabled him, in a course of years, and a short time before his brother's death, to purchase an estate a few miles distant from his brother (to whom he was most affectionately attached), and to retire to that ease and independency which so many sigh for, and so few attain.

In this retreat he had resumed his academical pursuits, and, by a judicious appropriation of his time to the theory and practice of the respective duties of life, divested it of that dull iteration which renders it so much a burthen to its indolent possessors.

In his management of young Henry, as he had leisure for observation, he was directed as much by circumstance as system. He had considered the various plans of education, as laid down

by philosophers and others, but had, generally, found them, like most other human systems, specious in theory, but vain in practice—"Precept is good," he would say, "but example is better—there is no human passion but is necessary to the conduct of human life; they are the springs of action, and, properly directed, are the genuine sources of happiness—it is only when they pass the pale of reason, that they produce disorder, and reverse the benign intention of their Divine Author."

Among the earliest lectures of Mr. Emerson to his young nephew were those against cruelty and pride: vices which are generally the first that present themselves in the opulent youth. Cruelty to dumb animals he combated by a general representation of their

services to us, and their right to the quiet enjoyment of that existence (so far as is compatible with the well-being of mankind) which the Great Creator has bestowed upon them — “And with respect to your fellow-creatures, Henry,” he would say, “let me impress it on your mind, that there cannot be a more flagrant instance of cowardice, than to insult or oppress the *poor*—because it *may* be done with impunity.

“In the present course of things, some *will* be rich, the many *must* be poor, and the poor should be subordinate to the rich: but as the natural rights of man are equal, and no one can say to another, I am by nature entitled to your subjection, it is evident that the subordination of the one

class is but reciprocally connected with the assistance and protection of the other—therefore, Henry, no rank or condition whatever can justify an assault upon the person, or an insult to the understanding of a fellow-creature—I mean not, that you should associate with the poor, because ignorance is generally the consequence of poverty, and vice too often the result of ignorance, but that you should ameliorate their condition by such kind offices as their wants and your duty may require.”

As Henry advanced in years, his mind gradually expanded, and the phenomena of Nature excited his curiosity with respect to their causes and effects.

*Quæ mare compescant causæ: quid temperet an-
num:*

Stellæ sponte suâ, jussæne vagentur et errent:

Quid premat obscurum Lunæ, quid proferat orbem:

Quid velit et possit, rerum concordia discors:

Empedocleum, an Stertinium deliret acumen.

HOR. lib. i. epist. xii.

Curious to search what bounds old Ocean's tides:

What through the various year the seasons guides:

Whether the stars by their own proper force,

Or foreign power, pursue their vagrant course:

Why shadows darken the pale Queen of night:

Whence she renews her orb, and spreads her light:

What Nature's jarring sympathy can mean:

And who, among the Wise, their systems best
maintain.

FRANCIS'S *Horace*.

To all his enquiries Mr. Emersly
made not only philosophical replies,
but drew moral inferences, tending at

the same time to excite his wonder and his gratitude.

There were certain days on which he administered to the necessities of his poor dependants, in exchange for their blessings; of these days he availed himself, to give to his young nephew a practical lesson on charity. The poor who were able attended his hall—the sick and impotent he visited at their homely cots—where his presence quickened the lagging pulse, and threw a ray of cheerfulness on the face of sorrow—to him the departing soul addressed her last action, through the dim eye of death!—emphatic silence spoke!—and asked protection for the widow or the helpless orphan!

Such was the man to whose direction the heart and mind of young

Henry were submitted, and thus was the due culture of them effected, to use the words of Laertius, ποτὲ μὲν διὰ τὰς τῶν ἐξωθεν πραγμάτων πιθανότητας· ποτὲ δὲ διὰ τὴν κατήχησιν τῶν συνόντων, by the convincing evidence of the things themselves, and the instructive inferences of his experienced teachers.

* * * * *

Mr. Emersly, as executor to his late brother, was frequently applied to by Lady Emersly for advice in the management of the estate during the minority of the young baronet, though in the management of *him* she preferred no opinion to her own.

A part of this estate had for many years given bread to the family of old Mortimer.

This man had served in several campaigns as a serjeant in the regiment of which the late Sir William had been colonel: and having, in an action with the Spaniards, saved the life of Sir William at the imminent risk of his own, that gentleman, when, at the conclusion of the war, the regiment was disbanded, leased him a small farm, for which he reserved a trifling rent, as a consideration, he would say, for stocking it, but which, in reality, he meant to return, with a handsome addition, as a marriage portion to his daughter—a poor girl whose life the humanity of the serjeant had likewise saved, and afterwards preserved. The old man was never better pleased than when he could get Sir William to listen to the story: and as it was a hu-

mane one, the good nature of Sir William afforded him many opportunities of telling it.

“ It was on that day, your honour,” the old veteran would say—“ it was on that day on which the brave B—— entered the town of Valencia—I shall never forget it—a short battle, but hard fighting, your honour,—covered with blood and sweat—the shouts of the victors here,—the groans of the wounded there—Poor John Thomson! —charging the enemy by my side—alive this moment—dead the next!—a musquet-ball went through his heart! —as good a soldier, your honour, as ever trod the field”—here the old man would drop a tear to the memory of his friend, and then pursue his story.

“ Your honour may remember when

we entered the town a party of Portuguese joined us.”

“ I do, Mortimer—they were our friends.”

“ Your honour was too much engaged at that time to observe the conduct of some of those rascals, who, bent wholly on pillage, deserted the public cause for their own private ends.

“ It was after we had compelled the enemy to lay down his arms, and the safety of the town was compounded for, that, in passing through one of the streets, I saw five of these fellows coming out of a house with several articles of gold and silver plate, which they were endeavouring to conceal—I went up to one of them, who, I knew, understood a little English, and told him I thought he was doing wrong, that

the property of the inhabitants was secured by treaty—he said it was Spanish property, and fair plunder.

“ I said no more, and was going from the house, when I thought I heard the cries of an infant—I don’t know, your honour, whether it is to my credit, as a soldier, to say it, but I could never hear the cries of man, woman, or child, without feeling an interest in them—in action, your honour knows, a soldier must lay aside his humanity, his duty prompts him and he must obey, and at such a moment what is his duty?—It is self-defence.

“ Your honour will excuse this digression—I have learned to think, since I left the army.”—(In truth, this honest veteran had been well educated, and nature had given him capacity—but

the impetuosity of his youthful passions having involved him in certain amorous difficulties, from which he saw no other likely means of relief, he became a soldier.)

“ The cries of the infant induced me to enter the house ; I went into several of the rooms, but found all deserted ; at last I discovered a back stair-case, which led to a suite of rooms, in one of which the cries of the child were distinctly heard—I burst open the door—the eye of Heaven is over all !—the wretch had the dear infant by its throat, with his hand just raised to take its life—Inhuman villain !—I hope, your honour, I, at that instant, atoned for all the blood I had shed before, in shedding his—I seized his arm before it fell—he turned, and, aiming a thrust

at me, I stabbed him with my bayonet—he fell, and I thought him dead—I took the child in my arms—(there she sits—now the only support of my old age)—I kissed it, and it smiled—Poor, dear innocent! a kiss had always been the pledge of safety to it, and it thanked me.—Your honour will pardon this interruption—my tears will always follow the recollection of it—when I offer to kiss her now, she holds her head averse, and seems to think she confers a favour on me—but—I am an old man—and an old man’s kisses are not warm enough for the ardour of youth.”

Ellen could never hear the story, but it warmed her gratitude—“Oh, my father!—my more than father!”—and then she would fall on his neck and

weep—while Mortimer, his heart glowing with virtuous pride, would resume his story.

“ That smile, your honour, was far more pleasing to me than the gold necklace round its neck, which, it appeared afterwards, was the only inducement to this enormous instance of barbarity—for perceiving the fellow stir, I offered what assistance I could—but the wound was mortal—he had barely time to confess, that he entered the house for plunder—that he had left his companions in hopes of some private booty, that might escape their notice—that he had found the infant alone, and that to get possession of the necklace, which was fastened with a small key-lock, and to prevent the cries of the child from apprizing his

comrades, he had determined to cut off its head!"

"Wars, Mortimer," Sir William would say, "may be necessary, may be just—but they are always cruel.—The hand and heart familiarized to blood, are dreadful instruments of human welfare!—We invoke Pandæmonium in our cause, and, I fear, are too often captivated by our horrid auxiliaries!"

"I understand your honour," the old veteran would say, "I afterwards heard that this man had not been, in his natural disposition, cruel—but what can we term his purpose?"

"Or how," (would Sir William say, improving on the honest serjeant's observation) "did he attain the firmness of nerve necessary to its execution?"

“ I left the body, dead as it was, and, with the child in my arms, walked through the house, hoping to meet with somebody who had a better right to it; when, in a room, which I had not observed before, I saw the ground sprinkled with blood, and in a corner of it a miniature picture of a woman—who, I have no doubt, was the unhappy mother of the child—I took it with me, and brought both the picture and the child to my wife—(Heaven rest her soul!—your honour’s kindness was the last subject she spoke of—) she was at that time suckling our Ned—I shall never forget it—when I brought the child to her—‘ So, William,’ said she, ‘ you have made a prize, but it will cost you something to keep it.’—But when I told her, your honour, how I

its appearance afterwards in the codicil, which being filled up but a few hours before his death, she had bribed the attorney to substitute a false duplicate for Sir William's signature (after reading the real one), in which the intended legacy to Ellen Mortimer was omitted—but the evil did not end here—Her ladyship could never after endure the neighbourhood of Mortimer; conscious of the injury she had done them, the sight of Mortimer or his daughter was, at all times, a tacit accusation of her guilt—however, as Mortimer had always paid his rent punctually, no opportunity had occurred of effecting her further purpose, which was, to dispossess him of his lease—but the old man's infirmities rendering it necessary to employ strange hands in

the management of his grounds, the expense became too great a drawback on their produce for his narrow circumstances to support.

The first year of his arrears was politically winked at by her ladyship—she was well aware that his difficulties would increase on the additional demand of a second—besides, it had an appearance of good-will, and she wished to preserve appearances—the second year was due, and a compromise was offered and refused.

One day, as Mr. Emersly was preparing to take his usual ride, he received a note from Lady Emersly, requesting half-an-hour's conversation with him.—Henry was with him, and they went together to Ashbourne Hall.

Mr. Emersly found her ladyship ready to receive him, and Henry was introduced to his brother in a separate apartment.

“ Mr. Emersly,” said her ladyship, after an unmeaning apology for dishabille, &c. “ as joint executor with me, I wish to consult you on an affair of some consequence to the estate—it is respecting Mortimer, the farmer—you may have heard your late brother mention him—he was a kind of dependant on Sir William many years, and so long as Sir William lived, and was pleased to countenance him, it was all very well ; but, Mr. Emersly, now that the estate is in other hands, I don’t see why any incumbrance of that kind should be entailed upon it.”

“ Your ladyship will excuse me, but I always understood that the farmer paid for what he had.”

“ Paid! Yes, truly, he paid, but what did he pay?—not one-third of the value—he now cannot pay that.”

“ How so, my lady?”

“ Why, I don’t know, Mr. Emersly, the man gets in years, and has a great overgrown girl to feed, though he can hardly live himself; in short, I can’t say how it happens, but he cannot pay his rent, and I, positively, will not see the rent-roll reduced by the deficiencies of Mortimer any longer—as to that minx of a girl that he has, do you know, she had the impudence to resist a salute from Sir William this morning, which, I am sure, the hussy might have thought herself honoured

by—but no—Miss has learned to talk of her virtue—I assure you—a poor peasant's girl talk of her virtue to a Baronet—but I thought what would be the consequence of Sir William's attention to her education—he had her taught so much above her condition, that, positively, the wench does not know herself.”

“ Surely, my lady,” interrupted Mr. Emersly, “ you are not serious in what you say—you ground your objections to the young woman, upon what is really her highest commendation—the virtue and reputation of a *poor* girl are the only pass-ports she has through life—deprive her of these, and you take from her all that can recommend her to the countenance of the state—take these from her, and she either pines

away her life in secret, or takes the high road of vice and infamy—My lady, recollect yourself—it is some years since I saw the lass, but I then thought her a pretty, modest girl; and I can remember being particularly struck with her filial attention to her father, who was an old man then.”

“ Well, Mr. Emersly,” replied her ladyship, “ I did not expect to have been insulted with a string of commonplace observations about virtue and reputation—I believe a lady of fashion needs not be told how to value reputation.”

“ The reputation of a lady of fashion,” replied Mr. Emersly, “ is too often founded on the wreck of virtue—but, as I certainly did not intend an insult to your ladyship, I ask your

pardon for what you have misconstrued one, and request your ladyship to resume the subject on which you do me the honour to consult me."

"I have only to inform you, Mr. Emersly, that I have this morning sent Mortimer a regular notice to quit."

"Then I presume your ladyship's notice cannot be perfectly regular—however, I will walk as far as the farmer's; and if I find there is a reasonable objection to his holding the lease, he shall surrender it."

Mr. Emersly then wished her ladyship good morning, and leaving Henry with his brother, went immediately to Mortimer's house.

CHAP. II.



THE Cottage of Hawthorn was a neat little mansion, situated in the bosom of a valley, surrounded by hills and intervening groves, through which a small stream meandering, turned in its course the “busy mill”—Nature had diversified the scene with every rural grace, and formed it for content.

When Mr. Emersly arrived, he found the old man in tears, smoking his pipe alone by the fire-side—the note he had received lay on the table—Mortimer arose, and, laying down his pipe, offered a chair to his guest.

“ I believe you do not recollect me,” said Mr. Emersly.

“ No, Sir,” replied Mortimer : “ but as you are pleased to visit my humble roof, I have a daughter shall assist me in making you welcome”—then calling for Ellen, he put the note in his pocket, and took his seat again.

“ I understand, farmer, you have lived many years a tenant of the late Sir William Emersly.”

“ Yes, Sir, and knew him many years before I was his tenant—We served in the wars together.”

“ Ay, ay, fellow soldiers?”

“ I can’t say that, Sir, for I was but a poor sergeant, and his honour was colonel.”

“ Well, well, you did your duty as a soldier as well as he.”

“ I hope I did, Sir.”

“ And how came you to be afterwards such close neighbours?”

“ Why, Sir, I had the good fortune to rescue Sir William from the unequal attack of three of the enemy opposed to his single hand—The colonel had received a wound in the sword-arm, and, fainting with fatigue and the loss of blood, fell just as I came up to his assistance—I stood over him with my bayonet fixed, and kept the enemy in play till one of my comrades joined me, and with his assistance disarmed them all three, and took them prisoners—the colonel recovering soon after, I led him to his tent, and left him to the care of the surgeon.

“ Being afterwards informed by what means he had been rescued from the

enemy, he took the first opportunity of thanking me, and at the same time told me he would never lose sight of my interest.—I have no doubt it was the colonel's intention to have had me made quarter-master on the first vacancy, but the war soon after ending, and the regiment being disbanded, his honour stocked this farm for me at a small rent, which he said he would take, partly on account of stocking it, and partly to support my respectability among the neighbouring farmers, but which he would take care should not be lost to my family; and certainly his honour was as good as his word, for he was at the whole expense of educating my children—My son, poor lad! has been dead these two years, but my girl is spared me, and

ever since the death of my wife has been my only comfort.”

Ellen at that instant came in from the garden with a handful of herbs, and seeing Mr. Emersly, started back, who rising from his seat, caught her hand, and smiling, said he hoped he had not frightened her.

It is not necessary to inform the reader what was the precise combination of lineaments that constituted the beauty of Ellen’s face—let it suffice to say, it had traits so irresistibly fascinating, that the sedate blood of Mr. Emersly himself was quickened to a degree of warmth that age had long deprived it of.—Her eyes were black and brilliant—her nose was neither Roman nor Grecian, but something between both—her lips, formed for the

Mortimer, I conceive you to be a very happy man."

"Sir," replied Mortimer, "I was happy, but—happiness is at an end with me, Sir,—I shall never be happy more."

"And what should make you otherwise than happy—you are old, it is true, and age has its infirmities—but let me tell you, Mortimer, they should be greatly relieved by the advantages you possess—to descend to the grave in peace is not the lot of every one, and your situation seems to give you a moral assurance of that—a sound mind, though with an infirm body, can divest death of half its terrors—and surely life should be a blessing to you in this delightful retirement—where, unmolested by a litigious neighbourhood—in the

possession of an affectionate daughter, and an easy competence, it affords every enjoyment which a reasonable man should desire.”

Mortimer's heart was full!

“ Sir, I have a daughter—thank Heaven—an affectionate one—for the rest—I had them once—but they are mine no longer—

“ Oh, Sir!—to conceive that daughter, so long the solace of my age—so long accustomed to the kindness of a fond father, dismissed from his protection, and exposed to the contempt and cruelty of an unfeeling world, wrings my heart—for I have lived long enough, Sir, to know, that neglect and scorn are too often the portion of those who have nothing but their virtue, their integrity, to recommend them,

and am, alas ! too sensible of the many snares unwary innocence is exposed to—yet this she is now to expect—Oh, my girl!” (here the old man bursting into tears, fell on his daughter’s neck)—“ Heaven protect you !”

The tears started into Mr. Emersly’s eyes.

“ Heaven will protect her, Mortimer—perhaps I may be its appointed instrument.”

“ You, Sir ?—a stranger ?—Oh my child !” — (Mortimer looked at his daughter—at Mr. Emersly—and then at his daughter again) — “ then she may be better able to bear the loss of me.”

The old man’s voice faltered as he spoke these last words, and his tears flowed afresh—the recollection of past

times bore heavily on his heart by a comparison with the present.

“Mortimer,” said Mr. Emersly, “you indulge your grief to an unreasonable excess—the weakness of your age may in some degree account for it—but experience might have taught you, that were the immediate consequences of your situation much worse than you describe them, the continual vicissitude of human affairs carries with it an assurance almost positive, that they would, with respect to you, improve—and though virtue alone may be too obscure to obtain the *immediate* notice of the world, it sooner or later is seen, admired, and meets a just reward.—I am no stranger to the inclemency of the world, or the hardships and difficulties to which all are, more or

less, exposed who are dependent on it—but think not Mortimer, that virtue, however humble, can ever want the protection and support and ultimate reward of Heaven !”

Ellen turned her lovely eyes on Mr. Emersly, and a tear of gratitude fell on her snowy bosom—the consolation of a friend offering assistance with advice, can only be conceived by those whose distresses have been thus relieved.

“ But tell me,” said Mr. Emersly, “ by what means your difficulties have occurred, and what they are.”

“ Sir,” said Mortimer, “ I am an old man, and, though once active, my limbs now refuse their service—my son, who might now have assisted me, being dead, I have been obliged to trust the management of my farm to stran-

gers—they have, by neglect, impaired my stock, and wasted my substance—but what is still more distressing to me; I had saved to the amount of 200*l.* the fruit of a long course of industry, which I had devoted to the settling of my daughter—this money I was prevailed upon to hazard, jointly with a neighbour, in bail for a man, whom I thought honest, but alas! to my cost, have found otherwise—he ran from his bail, and left me to answer the full amount of what I had engaged for, which was 50*l.* more than I was possessed of, after paying my rent, which, as I could not consider my own, I conceived I had no right to use. Thus situated, Sir, I must have gone to gaol, but for the kindness of the young Baronet, who advanced the 50*l.* for me,

and took a bond for the re-payment of it; at the same time promising never to enforce it, so long as I lived, and was unable to answer the condition of it."

"I am heartily glad to hear that part of your story," said Mr. Emersly: and so in truth he was, for a disinterested act of kindness was at all times pleasing to him, but it was infinitely more so as the act of Sir William, whose general character had given him so little reason to expect it. "I am very glad to hear it," said Mr. Emersly; "and so, ever since, your circumstances have been on the decline, and inadequate to your support?—Misfortune, Mortimer, differs widely from misconduct.

"I must now inform you, that I am

no stranger to what has happened—but though it was not directly asserted that your deficiencies arose from absolute misconduct, it was insinuated that your conduct was not, upon the whole, what it should be—as an executor of my brother's will, I thought it my duty to investigate the matter, that while the letter of the will is strictly attended to, the spirit of it may be preserved, which certainly indicates the same beneficence which so strongly marked his conduct towards you during his life.

“The clause which relates to you is thus expressed—‘The term of the lease which Mortimer holds being nearly expired, I desire it may be renewed to him on the same conditions he held it of me, and that the interest of him and his family be considered with the same

but made no other reply than by saying, if he failed in his intended provision for the girl, he had no doubt his uncle's beneficence would extend to her also.

“ You think, then,” said the Baronet, “ he would have no objection to extending his kindness to a pretty girl.”

“ I don't know,” replied Harry, “ what your opinion of my uncle may be, but if he did, you may rely upon it, his kindness would have a better motive than her beauty.”

“ No doubt—Mr. Emersly is a very charitable man—I understand, Harry, he means to make a parson of you—upon my honour, I think you will do credit to the cloth.”

“ Whatever my uncle designs for me,

I shall endeavour to do credit to his choice."

"Ay—I don't doubt it—but, Harry, which would be your choice—the army or the church—to win the hearts of the pretty young girls in a red coat, or the old women's hearts in a black one."

"The heart," replied Harry, "that would attach itself to either a red coat or a black one, would be an acquisition as precarious as the thing by which it was acquired—the approbation of age is honourable to youth—with respect to the hearts of young girls—I desire but one—whose congeniality with my own may add to the happiness of both."

"Very moderate indeed—and the purity of your desires doubtless.—Is it possible, Harry, that any thing could

add to the happiness of a young man so *singularly* virtuous?—'Pon my soul, Harry, you would cut a figure in a pulpit; and when you get into one, you may depend on my interest for your preferment;—but, to wave the subject at present, suppose we take a walk as far as Mortimer's cottage, I think you will find something there to raise your spirits."

Henry assenting to the proposal, they set out, and arrived at the cottage soon after Mr. Emersly had left it.

* * * * *

Among the various incidents of human life, there is, perhaps, none more decisive in its consequences, than that which produces love. The truth of this observation will be exemplified in

that of young Emersly's first interview with Ellen Mortimer.

He had now just entered his twentieth year, with all the sensibility which renders the youthful heart susceptible of that ardent passion—the early admission of a religious influence had given a serious air to his general deportment; but as it was accompanied by a liberality of sentiment, his address was easy and sincere—in company he was more cheerful than merry, and oftener seen to smile than laugh—as he had no talent for the ludicrous, he had no *current* wit—but to the “*feast of reason*” he could add “*the flow of soul*”—his complacency was general—his passions, qualified by reflection, were not violent, but lasting—and his professions never foreign to the dictates

of his heart—the period had now arrived when the charms of Ellen Mortimer were to create a new sensation there.

The promised assistance of Mr. Emersly had revived the drooping spirits of Mortimer and his daughter, and cheerfulness had again resumed her seat at the cottage of Hawthorn, when the young Baronet and his brother arrived.

Ellen, from the window, had seen them enter the outer gate, and, not satisfied with the charms Nature had bestowed upon her, had run up stairs, to add to them those of a white muslin gown, straw hat, and pink ribands, while her father was entertaining them in his best manner below.

The Baronet was not a little surprised to find such an air of cheerful-

ness about the old man, who, as far as he knew, had every reason to be in the utmost extremity of distress—but as Mortimer's unexpected vivacity added much to the welcome, the Baronet's curiosity was for a time suspended in the enjoyment of it. Indeed, a cheerful welcome is so immediately directed to the heart, that it might arrest, for the moment, the machinations of the devil himself—those of the Baronet had too just a reference to that Being to escape the allusion—what they were will amply appear in the course of this history.

Ellen had been twice summoned by her father to acknowledge the honour of this visit, but had not been able to make her appearance ; and at the third summons was half way down stairs,

when she found a reason for returning back again ; and the classic reader may find an apology for her in the 14th book of the Iliad, where, if the cestus was necessary to a goddess, how could an obscure mortal effect her purpose without it?—whether the charm existed in the cestus, or in the lovely form it enclosed, it is not necessary now to determine ; it was certainly considered by Ellen as a powerful adjunct to beauty, or she would not have trespassed so far on her father's patience.

This omission being supplied, she entered the parlour ; and having addressed the young gentlemen with a graceful welcome, she took her seat by the side of her father.

The Baronet, anxious for the prosecution of his designs, took the first

opportunity of obtaining an explanation of Mortimer's tranquility, and soon after the ordinary observations and inquiries of health and weather—"Mortimer," said he, "I suppose you received her ladyship's note this morning—I am glad to find you hold the consequences so lightly, and as I am never better pleased than to see an old man happy, I have prevailed with my brother to use his interest, in procuring a reception for you in his uncle's house, till some means may be thought of to settle you in another way—Miss Ellen shall, if I have any influence, be handsomely provided for, as a companion to Lady Emersly, so that you may easily perceive, Mortimer, the motive that produced her ladyship's note was not a malicious one."

“ Indeed, Sir William,” replied Mortimer, “ your goodness is too clear to be doubted ; but this house has been too long my home to be voluntarily exchanged for any other than my grave.”

“ How have you the liberty of choosing ?” said the Baronet, somewhat alarmed by the confidence with which Mortimer replied.—“ Did you understand the contents of the note you received ?”

“ I did, Sir William, and felt for myself and for my daughter—but by the bounty of Mr. Emersly, the unhappy consequences are likely to be prevented ; and as you have assured me the notice was sent with no malicious motive, the payment of my arrears will, I hope, procure us the continuance of your

kindness.—Were your father living, Sir William—but I ask your honour's pardon—I am a foolish old man—with respect to my daughter—if she should want a home, when I am gone—I could wish her *that* you had so kindly intended for me.”

“Mortimer,” replied the Baronet, “there is a sort of comparative reflection in that choice, which is a very unhandsome return for the evidently good intention of my offer; you may recollect another instance of my good-will towards you; and these I had meant but as an earnest of my future assistance—but it seems you are averse from any obligation to me, that it is in your power to decline.”

Mortimer, conscious of the condition the bond could enforce, thought it ne-

cessary to appease the anger of the Baronet by an explanation in these words :

“ Sir William, you are yet young ; but if you live to my years, you will find that our attachments strengthen by time—this humble shed, and the society of my daughter, have so long afforded their comforts, that my life is dependent on them ; should it please Heaven to end my days—I should commend my girl to Mr. Emersly’s protection, as to that of a man, who having seen the world, and known its fallacy, would be better able to advise her of the means necessary to oppose its crafty influence—therefore, affection to my daughter—not ingratitude to you, Sir William, prompts me to this choice.”

This explanation might have satisfied

the Baronet had his designs been honourable; they were not so, and his disappointment was a sufficient plea to himself for the prosecution of that scheme of villany he had planned, and was now determined to forward the execution of, rather than forego the accomplishment of his illicit ends.

The Baronet was about to reply, when a servant from Ashbourne Hall came to inform young Henry that his uncle waited his return—Harry started as from a dream, in which his power of utterance had been suspended by contemplation—he had not been long subject to the influence of Ellen's charms, before he felt a new sensation, pleasing while it pained—the gentle flame was gradually kindled as his eyes met hers; and, as their language is

addressed immediately to the heart, a mutual understanding was soon the consequence of their tacit correspondence. At the summons of the servant Harry arose, and taking Ellen by the hand, looked an adieu, bowed, and with a sigh expressed his love—the blush of maiden modesty suffused the cheek of Ellen—with submissive eyes she assented to his passion, and with implicit faith resigned her heart for his.

The artifice of fashion—the decorum of the world in the conduct of an amatory connexion, may be necessary to its general manners, but it is extraneous to nature—from this branch of hypocrisy are derived the insidious arts of the coquette, who, privileged by rules thus sanctioned, may alternately encourage and repulse the addresses of

sincerity, till the unhappy lover, desperate by suspense, finds in the supercilious smile of cruel insensibility his answer, and the termination of his delusive hopes !

In the instance above related, *Nature* prompted *Ingenuousness*.

* * * * *

At the departure of the Baronet, whose displeasure was too evident to be unnoticed, Mortimer found himself in a state of the most anxious suspense. which Ellen, notwithstanding the perturbed state of her own mind, immediately observed, and endeavoured to relieve—she laid her arm on his shoulder—

“ Father, you seem uneasy ? ”

Mortimer was too much absorbed in thought to answer.

“ Father, you are not well ?”

Mortimer was silent.

“ Father ?”

“ My child ?”

“ What is the matter ?”

“ Nothing, child, nothing !”

“ Shall I fill your pipe ?”

“ —It may be an unfounded fear after all—but if it should not prove so”-

“ Father ?”

By this time poor Ellen’s heart was full.

“ Father ?”—and she gently shook him—he looked up—

“ Ellen — why, what’s the matter, girl ?”

“ Oh, Sir—you seem very uneasy—what can be the reason of it?”

“ Nothing, child, nothing.—Have you fed the poultry? Are the cows home?”

“ No, father—it is early yet.”

“ You are dressed very finely, Ellen—how is this?”

“ Why, father, you know one must be decent to receive company.

“ Ay, right, right—draw me a mug of ale, my girl—I’ll smoke one pipe, and then to bed.”

“ So early, father?”

“ Draw me a mug of ale, my dear.”

Mortimer drank his ale, smoked his pipe, and then retired to bed.

CHAP. III.



IMPRESSED with sentiments of the most tender nature towards young Emersly, Ellen sat up long beyond her usual hour, to indulge in idea the probable consequences of that attachment which the conduct of Henry and her own feelings corroborated beyond a doubt of its reality.

With her head reclined upon her hand she sat and mused. Hope led her to anticipate the happiness of some future interview, when their mutual anxiety might be relieved by the sweet interchange of vows, while Fancy pre-

sented his ideal image, in which the charms of form and feature were enhanced by love.

Thus lost in contemplating her future happiness, she neglected her present safety.

Growler was at her feet—where he should have been her fears soon told her.—The latch of the cottage-door was raised, the Baronet entered—Ellen shrieked, and Growler barked—Growler did more—mindful of his duty, though out of his place—he seized the skirts of the Baronet's coat, and, looking at him, seemed only to wait the commands of his mistress to proceed to further violence.

“Madam,” said the Baronet, “call off your dog.”

“Oh, Sir William, what can be the

meaning of this visit, at such a time?
—For Heaven's sake”—

“ Madam, I request you will call off your dog.”

Ellen faintly called Growler—Growler wagged his tail—looked at his mistress, then at the Baronet, and obeyed the call—her fears now increased—and she again requested to know the cause of so unexpected a visit—he assured her his designs were honourable, and his visit in consequence of those designs—that returning home with his brother, he had reason to believe, from the conversation that occurred, that his brother had conceived an interest in her affections, which he thought he had a prior title to—that he had been ever since in a state of distraction, and that the extremity of his sufferings was the

only apology he could offer for the unseasonable intrusion he stood charged with.

Ellen heard the Baronet's apology; and having evaded a direct answer, by expressing her surprise that a person in so humble a station as she was could occasion any uneasiness in the breast of a Baronet, entreated that he would no longer trifle with a helpless girl, whose present situation exposed her to the misconstruction of a worthy father and a censorious world—that if his designs were honourable he could not give a more direct proof that they were so than by quitting the house immediately.

The Baronet, unwilling to relinquish an opportunity so favourable to his real purpose—convinced, likewise, that he

had a powerful opponent to the prosecution of it in his brother, was determined to obtain by force what he now began to despair of obtaining by any other means—he threw his arms around her waist, and was proceeding to the most unwarrantable liberties, when Growler, unaccustomed to see his mistress so roughly handled, seized the Baronet by the breast, and brought him to the ground, where (such was the honest fury of this faithful animal) he would, in all probability, have breathed his last, had not Ellen recovering a little from her fright, with much difficulty got the dog away.

The Baronet was for some time unable to rise; and when he did, was so weakened by his struggle with the dog, that Ellen was obliged to lead him to

a chair, in which having placed him, she generously warmed him some elder wine, and administered every thing for his recovery her judgment suggested, and the place could afford.

The Baronet had just recovered from his fright and fatigue, when Ellen heard her father stirring above stairs—the noise, as may be supposed, had awakened him, and alarmed for the safety of his daughter, he had risen, and entered her chamber; but not finding her there came directly down stairs, where, to his astonishment, he found Sir William sitting faint and pale, and Ellen in the greatest disorder supporting his head.

“ Good Heaven ! ” cried Mortimer, “ what has happened ? ”

Ellen trembling at the truth, begged her father would not trouble the Baro-

net with questions, as it was necessary he should be kept as quiet as possible, and requested he would put on the rest of his clothes.

While Mortimer was gone up stairs, her mind, suspended between truth and falsehood, revolved, but could not determine which to adopt in accounting to her father for present appearances—the truth, she knew, would excite his anger, and a false representation, she feared, would incur his suspicion—the consequences of his anger might involve his ruin from the Baronet—the result of his suspicion must deprive her of his future confidence—from this embarrassment she was, however, somewhat relieved by the Baronet, who, rising up just as Mortimer re-entered the room, took him by the hand

saying, he was very sorry to have occasioned so much trouble and alarm, but in his return from a visit to a friend that evening, just arrived from abroad, he had been attacked by two men, who, after robbing him, had attempted to take his life, which he saved by leaping over the pales of the garden, and, seeing a light in the cottage, he thought he could better secure his escape by getting admission within, but that the dog had opposed his entrance with that violence which had so much alarmed them—that he considered himself greatly obliged by the kind services of Miss Mortimer, and requested he might have the pleasure of entertaining them both at Ashbourne Hall the next day, where he should expect them to dine—he then took his leave, and Mortimer and his

daughter retired to their respective chambers.

The next morning Mortimer (whose mind had been greatly relieved, by this invitation, from the apprehensions it had formed the day before, in consequence of the Baronet's warm reply) while taking his breakfast with Ellen, was extolling the liberal disposition of the Baronet, who, he said, could not receive the smallest favour without offering a return, and was descanting on the noble efforts of a generous heart to amplify the compensation—when he observed a scar on the breast of Ellen, which, in her struggle with the Baronet, she had received from his shirt buckle, and which now imposed a sudden silence on Mortimer's tongue—the whole subject matter of his suspicion,

which the first appearance of the Baronet's indisposition and Ellen's disorder had occasioned, and which nothing but the Baronet's recital of the feigned accident, and Mortimer's charitable credulity, which had always inclined to the fair side of human conduct, would have removed, again revived—her breast scarified—her dress disordered—her mind embarrassed when questioned as to the cause of so unseasonable an alarm—were circumstances which strongly militated against the truth of what the Baronet had advanced; besides which, Ellen had not ventured to resume the tale, or, by any relative observations, to give any personal sanction to it.

Mortimer doubted, but suspended his judgment—Ellen, unconscious how

far she had exposed herself to her father's diffidence, with her usual affability and attention, endeavoured to engage his favour, while her thoughts dwelt still on Henry, whose image followed as her fancy strayed, the inseparable companion of each vague idea.

Little was done that morning but to prepare for their visit to Ashbourne Hall, whither they went, and were received by her ladyship with as much ceremony and as little sincerity as may be found in the first circles of fashion in London—by the Baronet they were received with politeness; and with respect to Ellen, he was certainly sincere in his *welcome*, but his views extended much further than his words implied.

They had not long been seated, when

the servant announced a Captain Sedley—Captain Sedley entered the room—bowed to the company—took his seat—observed how dirty the roads were—how short the days—that really the preparation *for*, and performance of, a short journey were the occupation of a day—that the fatigue so exhausted his spirits by the time he got to the end of it, that the excess he was obliged to resort to afterwards for a recruit necessary to render him what he called *good company*, was a direct sacrifice of health to friendship.

Such was the style of address from a man who, with an uncommon flow of spirits and a volubility of tongue, had pushed himself into situations, which might have procured him a handsome independency, had his conduct been

directed by principles of common honesty.

In his early years, he was a *smart boy*—a little older, and he was a *bright youth*—and as plain dealing had not sufficient scope for the versatility of his parts, no profession appeared so eligible to display his *brightness* as the law.—His father's circumstances had not been sufficient to qualify him for the *Bar*—but the more humble practice of an attorney had afforded him wills, bonds, leases, assignments, and various other species of agreement, for the exercise of his jesuitical genius.

It was for his dexterity in accommodating the wills of the deceased to the wishes of certain survivors, that he had been employed by Lady Emersly in assisting the late Sir William to

make his last bequests, and, at the same time to oblige her ladyship at the expense only of depriving a poor girl of a comfortable competency.—But in a subsequent case, his daring genius had very nigh procured him an exaltation equal to his merits, and *sus. per coll.* been the motto of his dignity—for having in a somewhat similar instance been detected by the injured party, nothing but his consanguinity, and due compensation, would have prevented its taking place—the detection of a small misdemeanor compared with the capability of his talents, at last put an end to his practice as an attorney. But his genius was not to be repressed by these little adversities of fortune—his qualifications had been useful to the Baronet's mother—the Baronet was now

of an age and inclination to make them useful to himself in the acquisition of certain pleasures, to which the relative considerations of honour and conscience are not thought necessary—to adapt his appearance to the importance of his employ, it was the opinion of the Baronet, that a gentleman's coat should be put upon the back of a scoundrel—an ensigncy was purchased for him, and he was now *Captain Sedley*, Pimp, Bully, or Assassin, as circumstances might require.

It was by the information of Sedley that the Baronet was previously assured that Ellen was opportunely disposed, by privacy and solitude, for the success of his intrusion the night before—the presence of Sedley now, as an assassin, was to prelude the execu-

tion of a scheme of villany, only worthy of such a principal as Sir William Emersly and such a coadjutor as Sedley.

The conversation at dinner was general—the cloth being removed, and the wine circulated, it became gradually more partial, and her ladyship and the Baronet, at length, adapted their topics to their respective purposes.

Her ladyship was a long time occupied in suggesting reasons to Mortimer for the resignation of his lease, which, she said, must, in his present circumstances, require a greater degree of exertion to hold, than was compatible with that ease and tranquility which his age required, with many other arguments, that only proved the infirmity of a guilty mind ; she wished to exonerate her conscience of the oppression

which the sight of Mortimer and his daughter occasioned, and mistook a series of unfounded arguments and false conclusions for the means of dissolving an attachment strengthened by time, and essential to the very existence of an old man.

Mortimer was silent to them all—Indeed, his attention had been very much diverted from her ladyship's conversation by that of the two gentlemen, which being addressed to his daughter, with an air of disrespectful levity, his prudence would no longer allow him to connive at—with apparent cheerfulness, therefore, he arose, and thanking her ladyship and the Baronet for their kind entertainment, requested leave to depart.—This was politely objected to by her ladyship, but positively

resisted by the Baronet; he was not prepared for their departure.—Her ladyship requested the favour of their company a little longer, and was sorry to be deprived of it so soon—the Baronet appealed to Miss Mortimer, if there could be any reason for departing so suddenly, and, without attending to her answer, laid hold of Mortimer, insisting he should stay till the carriage could be got ready for them, which, he said, should be at their service as soon as the coachman returned from his uncle's, whither he had sent him with a message.

Mortimer, seeing the Baronet resolved on detaining them, sat down ; and, shortly after, Sedley arose, and took his leave, saying, he had engaged to join a card-party that evening at a friend's house about three miles distant.

The Baronet again promoted the circulation of the bottle—the exhilarating quality of the wine, by degrees, deprived Mortimer of his usual circumspection; and even the pride of Lady Emersly was divested of its unnatural excess, and she now vouchsafed to smile on her company; inebriation became almost a virtue, in bringing to the common level of human infirmity the low and the lofty, and thus reconciling the differences which the adventitious circumstances of fortune had rendered inimical to sociality.

The jealousy of Mortimer from former circumstances was now removed—he felt himself equal to his company, and his heart was as open as his mind was free—he now and then adverted to the memory of the late Sir William,

and was more than once beginning to fight their old battles over again, but was as often interrupted by her ladyship with some irrelative question—she had violated his last will, and every recurrence to his memory was irksome to her feelings.

Mortimer had just answered one of her ladyship's evasive questions, and was beginning to state the respective positions of the two armies at the battle of —, when the company were surprised by the entrance of Harry Emersly—the downcast eyes of Ellen were raised to welcome an object so dear to her, and she blest the unknown circumstance that brought him thither.

Lady Emersly having questioned her son Henry respecting the object of his unexpected visit—he answered, with

hesitation, that, having heard from the coachman's report at Elderfield Hall, that his brother had been attacked by robbers, he was apprehensive that the consequences might be more serious than they had been represented, and had expressed a wish to his uncle of informing himself more particularly of his brother's real situation.

(It may be necessary to inform the reader that the Baronet's policy had induced him to be consistent in the above story, which he had imposed on his mother as well as on Mortimer.)

“ Well,” replied her ladyship, “ I am very glad to see you, Henry ; but the coachman could have relieved you from any serious apprehension, by informing you of our receiving company to day.”

Henry knew it, and knew likewise the company to be received ; and, by endeavouring to conceal the real object of his visit, made the following weak reply—That he understood so; but as the coachman might be misinformed, or might misunderstand, he was uneasy, and wished to relieve himself by ascertaining from her *Ladyship's* account how his brother was.

Love attaches every circumstance to its own concern.

From Henry's awkward manner, Ellen drew an inference favourable to her wishes, and believed herself to be the real object of his visit—the Baronet thought so likewise, and, stung with jealousy or disappointment, complained of a sudden* head-ach, and left the room—the absence of the Baronet from

indisposition broke up the company ; and as the coachman had not returned, Henry, happy to avail himself of the opportunity, offered his assistance in conducting Miss Mortimer home—Mortimer made many respectful objections ; but the silence of Ellen was an acquiescence in his offer, and obviated every other consideration.

CHAP. IV.



THE sun was sunk beneath the horizon, and the faint refraction of his rays by the surrounding atmosphere served but to dim the brightness of the moon, who now displayed her full orb in the opposite part of the heavens, when Henry, with Ellen and Mortimer, left Ashbourne Hall—the anxious mind of Mortimer, bent on home, hastened his steps before, and left to the enamoured pair the enjoyment of a private conversation and a slower pace.

Omnia vincit amor—Love overcame the diffidence of young Emersly—he

took her hand as the presumptive pledge of faith, which Ellen, abashed, gently withdrew—and hung her head, and sighed. Of his love she had no doubt—but the disparity of their fortunes, and the serious aversions she apprehended of those whose hearts and eyes would see and feel but the influence of the world and its ways, induced a sudden despondency — she sighed!—

“Miss Mortimer,” said the serious lover, “can the impulse of a heart affectionately devoted to your service have so far mistaken its object as to occasion your displeasure—Oh, answer me”—He again seized her hand—it remained in his, but was accompanied with a deeper sigh—his confidence increased with her despondency, and he touch-

ed her lips—she started, and frowned —“ You have mistaken me, sir, and involved yourself in contradiction; had you a heart devoted to my happiness, it could not have suggested an insult to my character—I am poor—but, sir, not so circumstanced as to submit to liberties beyond the limits of propriety.”

The objections of Ellen were not those of the prude—her resistance was the result of that discreet pride which is inseparable from the dignity of feminine virtue in a humble station.

Henry, thus advised that his advances were too hasty, was about to apologize, when Ellen interrupted him, by observing, that her father was conversing with the Baronet—he offered his hand, into which she dropped her own, and smiled.

Mortimer turned with the Baronet, and the latter, in passing, apologized for absenting himself so abruptly, by saying, that he found it necessary to go into the fresh air, from which he always derived great relief in his cephalic ailments; and, after expressing himself extremely sorry for the delay of his coachman, wished them good evening.

They were now within half-a-mile of Hawthorn—Mortimer took to his former pace, saying, he longed to see the smoke of his own chimney, while Henry, unwilling to lose the present opportunity of avowing his love, was proceeding with all the ardency of expression which the sincerity of his passion inspired—when he was suddenly interrupted by a deep and distant groan—

Ellen started, and immediately cried out, "Oh my father!"—Henry ran to the end of the lane, which was terminated by a sloping hill, at the bottom of which he saw Mortimer struggling with two men, and almost overpowered—he ran, or rather threw himself, down the hill, and with the whole force of his body brought one of the ruffians to the ground—Mortimer thus assisted, exerted his remaining strength, while his brave soul, supported by a just cause, recoiled at the thought of subjection to a villain—the power of Heaven re-nerved his arm—he struck the guilty coward, and levelled him with the ground—man to man, the odds was justice; it prevailed, and the unworthy wretches asked mercy of those they could least expect it from.

“Who, and what are ye?” said Henry. “What was your design in this assault?”—They said, they were two poor husbandmen—that they had been hired, by a person they did not know, nor had ever seen before, to assist in way-laying them, for the purpose, they believed, of carrying off a young woman that was expected in their company.

“Oh Heavens!” cried Henry—and immediately ran up the hill—she was gone!—he hastened to the spot where he had left her, and burst into tears—with his eyes fixed on the ground, he stood for some minutes lost—when his recollection returned, a fresh flow of tears relieved him from his stupor—he looked around—he listened—weighed one conjecture with another, and, at

last, unable to determine what course to follow in the pursuit, returned to consult with Mortimer—but whom he found supported by his mother's coachman, and almost dead with the loss of blood which flowed from a wound he had received in his head—the man had bound up the wound, and was endeavouring to place him on his horse, that he might convey him home.

The distress of Henry was now complete; every minute was an age that detained him from the pursuit of his dear Ellen—and Mortimer's situation demanded immediate assistance—when he thought of the probable consequences of *her* case, he was frantic—when he looked on the pale face of Mortimer, his heart bled within him—he could not forsake him—in attempting to place



It was near midnight when Henry left the cottage at Hawthorn.

Unassisted by any direction in his course, he sat out in search of the dear object of his affection—he passed the spot where he left her, and her last words, the pious exclamation, “Oh my father!” vibrated in his ear—he sighed! and “Oh my Ellen!” said the disconsolate youth, “how has thy piety been rewarded?—Oh, thou wert all that Heaven could desire, or man could hope for—thy heart was the seat of innocence; and thy mind, pure as the thoughts of angels, appeared in the beauteous face it animated—perhaps at this instant under the hand of brutal violence, thou art imploring help, and no help near!”

Thought after thought rushed into his mind, and his apprehensions increased at the accession of each new idea.

He had now reached the top of the lane, and, debating with himself a few minutes which road to take, determined, as his chance seemed equal either way, to avoid that which led to Ashbourne Hall, that he might risk no interruption from the family.

The moon had finished half her nocturnal course, and shone, the Empress of the Night, attended by the bright host of heaven, while the waving woods and waters, agitated by the northern breeze, reflected her silver beams, and diversified the rural scene with distinct light and shade.

Henry rode on, but the midnight

silence and majestic grandeur of the heavens, accustomed to inspire his mind with thoughts sublime as the objects that produced them, now increased his melancholy to the verge of madness.

He had been some time lost in a deep reflection on his baffled hopes, when he was suddenly aroused by the noisy slumbers of certain itinerants, called gypsies—a human form, being the only probable minister of intelligence, was welcome to Henry—he alighted, and, as they lay in the shade of an old oak, was under the necessity of intruding on their privacy to address his request—he found them male and female, a truss of straw their bed, and their curtain an old blanket extended on a few poles.

Henry went up to one who seemed

to have more good nature in his countenance than the others, and shaking him by the shoulder, the fellow muttered a few curses, shifted his side, and snored again.

He now began to think there was more good nature in his countenance than in his heart : but recollecting that oaths and curses are mere expletives in the language of this class of people, he applied to his shoulder again.—The fellow now started up with a dreadful oath, and, looking at Henry, asked what he wanted with him.

“ My friend,” said Henry, “ I ask your pardon for disturbing you”—“ D—n pardon,” interrupted the fellow, “ let me alone.” So saying, he was going to throw himself down again, when Henry thought of a better kind

of apology, and, putting a shilling into his hand, asked him if he had seen a young woman in a white gown, with a straw hat and pink ribands, pass that way."

"Bless your honour, no—I have been asleep these two hours."—

Then calling to his next bed-fellow, he roused him—as he hoped, to a *speculation* of profit; who rubbing his eyes, and looking about him—Henry put the question to *him*, promising to satisfy him for the sleep he had lost.

"I don't know—I'm sure—what—would your honour come down any thing?"

Henry not clearly understanding him—hesitated.

"Oh," said the fellow, "if you will not come down, why—somebody else

has--and, d--n me, honour is honour ;
I say honour is honour."

Henry thinking the man was not perfectly awake—asked his companion what he meant.

"Why, Sir," said he "I remember now, when he joined us about two hours ago, he said as how he had met a man and woman on horseback, and that the woman cried out to him for help, and told him she had been forced away from her father in returning home, by a strange man, who was carrying her she did not know where—but when he bid the man let her go, the man said as how she was a gentleman's daughter that had run away from her father with a man she had fell in love with ; and gave him a guinea to go about his business, and, if he met any body on the

road that inquired after her, not to give any information—but I dare say, if your honour would come down something—that is, if your honour would give anything, he would tell you all he knows.

Henry, thinking his comrade's first engagement one of those that are more 'honoured in the breach than the observance,' offered another guinea if he would tell truly which road they took. Having held out his hand, and taken the bribe, he told him to turn off to the left into the cross-country-road, and go straight on, till he came to the sign of the Crown, for that he had seen them stop there, and they might be there still for any thing he knew.

Henry turned off according to the fellow's direction, and rode above five miles without seeing a house of any

kind, and had begun to doubt the veracity of his information, when he arrived at the end of a long narrow lane, and a little way down it, saw something swinging backwards and forwards, which, upon his coming nearer, he found to be a square board, and, upon a closer inspection, read at the bottom of it. “*This is the Crown*”—above the writing was the sign of the Crown, if it might be called a crown that had more the resemblance of a quartern loaf.

Henry tapped at the window of the attic story as he sat on his horse, and, after several times calling for the host, a long brown face appeared under a red night-cap through the casement, and an old hoarse voice cried out, “Who’s there?—Who the devil art thee?”

“Pray, Sir,” said Henry, “was there not at your house this evening a young lady in a white gown, in company with a man on horseback?”

“Ah, lack-a-day!—lack-a-day!” said a voice within.—“Thomas—Thomas—why Thomas, I say—where be’st thee?—Hu, Hu, Hu,—why Thomas, I say, why doesn’t answer?”

“D—n thee, Peg,” said the voice at the window (which Henry now concluded to be that of the landlord), “what dost thee want—sleeping or waking, thee art always magging.”

“Ah, well, well, well—thou be’st an odd man, Thomas—an odd man,” replied the other.

All this while Henry waited for his answer

“What dost thee say, friend?” quoth the man.

“Have you,” said Henry, “entertained a young woman at your house this evening?”

“No,” replied the landlord, “we have got no young woman, but our girl Bess, and I’m sure thee canst want nothing with her at this time o’night: so get along about thy business, for I’m sure thee hast none here.”

“Why, Thomas, who be’st thee ta’king to—be’st thee ta’king in thee sleep—come to bed, chuck, come.”

The man, vexed at being disturbed, d——d both Henry and his wife, and was going to shut the casement, when the old woman, who had got out of bed, came to the window.

“Get thee away, Thomas,” quoth

Goody, “ get thee away, and let me see who thee be’st ta’king to—who art thee, friend ?”

Henry then told her, that he was a gentleman, and in search of a young lady that had been forced away by some villains, and, he was informed, had been seen to stop there.

“ See now, see now, see now,” said the old dame ; “ I durst to say, it was that poor dear lady that fainted away, and begged so hard to be taken from the fellow that brought her here—Ah, Thomas ! Thomas ! thee wast always an obstinate man, and I could never make thee otherwise ; did not I tell thee it was some poor dear lady in distress ?” then turning to Henry, “ My dear young gentleman—Lord, I am so sorry—she was here not an hour ago—

the poor dear lady was so ill, that I wanted my husband to keep them here all night—but he be so obstinate—and so they went away not an hour ago, and I durst to say did not get farther than the Bell, a little way down the lane—I durst to say they did not, for the poor dear lady was so ill—and who knows whether Molly would let them in—for though Will Hurst be as good a soul as ever lived, Molly be just like my husband—if she take it in her head, she will be as obstinate as a pig, for all she know she be in the wrong. Do call at the Bell, Sir,—I'm sure I would do any thing to serve that poor dear lady—she did beg so hard—I'm sure it made my heart ache to think what would become of her.”—Henry, after thanking the old lady for her information and concern,

took his leave, and went on to the Bell.

He applied to the window as before, which was presently opened by the host, a young man, who no sooner saw Henry, than he cried out—

“ Bless my heart !—my young master?—Who could have thought of seeing you here, and at this time o’night—Moll, get thee up, girl, and strike a light—if here isn’t young Master Emersly I’ll be shot.”

Henry was not less pleased than surprised to find this Will Hurst, to be the same as had been formerly groom to his uncle.

Will was down stairs in an instant to offer whatever his house might afford to Henry, who had always been beloved by the servants ; and conceiving nothing

else than that he meant to take up his lodging there that night, began to rouse his wife.

“Molly, my dear, do put those sheets to the fire, and see that they are well aired my dear girl—Lord, Master Henry, I’m so glad to see you—now I take it main kind of you to think of poor Will.—Well, and how does my good old master—heaven bless his heart—I shall never forget his goodness to me when I broke my arm—when that jade Betsey threw me into the gravel-pit—Molly!’——

“My good fellow,” interrupted Henry “don’t give yourself any trouble in providing for me here, for”——

“Bless you, *trouble!*—Master Harry, I thought you knew me better—*trouble!*”——

Will was off like a shot, and in two minutes returned loaded with some excellent ham, while Molly followed with bread, cheese, and ale.

“ Now,” said Will, “ if your honour can make shift with our homely fare, there it is—Molly, my good girl do you tend the squire while I put up his horse.”

Henry had found it hitherto impossible to interrupt the hearty welcome of honest Will; but when he saw him running off to put up his horse, he was obliged to lay a quick hand on him.

“ My worthy fellow,” said Henry, “ I have not a moment to spare, even to refresh myself—I am now in pursuit of a young lady who has been forced away by some villains in returning with her father and me from Ashbourne ;

and being informed they had been at the Crown, and that having left it not an hour ago, it was probable they had called here in their way—as the lady was extremely ill—”

Henry’s heart and eyes were full—Will observed it, and turning to his wife—Ah, curse thy obstinacy, Moll!”

“ What said Henry ?”

“ Upon my soul, Sir,” said Will, “ I believe the lady you mean was here not half-an-hour before you—there was a man with her, and they came both on one horse.”

“ Half-an-hour ?” said Henry ;
“ Which way went they ?”

“ Why, Sir,” replied Will, “ this lane is two miles long, and they can’t have reached the end of it yet, for they went at a very slow pace.”

“ Have you a pistol in the house ? ” said Henry.

“ I have two, Sir,” replied Will—and immediately ran up stairs—in the mean while Henry mounted his horse—Will gave him the pistols—and, shutting the door after him, at Henry’s desire, mounted behind.

They rode at full speed till they got to the end of the lane ; when, having alighted, Will advised Henry to take to the right, while he went to the left ; and as the road was circular, enclosing an extent of common about two miles broad, to meet on the opposite side.

Accordingly they separated and Henry, aided by the light of the moon, rode on briskly, but circumspectly—he looked and listened—but in vain—till arriving at the entrance of a long

road, he saw in the shade of the hedge, about twenty yards down it, and at a little distance from him, something white lying across the foot-path—he rode up to it—it was Ellen, alone, and almost lifeless—he raised her gently—her pale sunk countenance indicated the extreme distress she had struggled with—he spoke to her—kissed her—bound up her hair, which hung disordered over her shoulders—but no signs of life appeared—he mounted his horse, and, laying her before him, supported her head on his arm, and rode back to meet Will.

Casting his eyes by chance over the hedge as he rode back to the common, he saw a man at a distance, by the side of a brook, in the next field, who, after filling the crown of his hat with water, hastened back to the place he had just

left—it now struck him that he must be the villain he had been in pursuit of—he checked his horse with an intention to secure the rascal ; but recollecting the assistance that would be necessary, and that Will Hurst could afford, he thought it better to quicken his pace towards him.

Ellen still remained without any apparent animation ; but the motion of the horse being quickened he soon after observed her to move, she fetched a deep sigh !—Henry stopped the horse, and raising her head, she sighed again, and moaned—by this time Will was in sight—Henry beckoned him to make haste, and expected every moment to see her eyes open.

Will soon came up.

“ Heaven be praised ! ” said Will ;

“ your honour has found the poor dear lady.”

“ Will,” said Henry, “ you must assist me to take the scoundrel ; he is now a little way down the road.”

Will did not stop to answer, but ran as fast as he could towards the place ; Henry however, suddenly recollecting that the surprise his presence would occasion to Ellen when she first opened her eyes might be too much for her, he called him back again, and laying her in his arms, begged he would move homewards with the horse—Will made many objections to leaving him, but Henry insisted, and Will obeyed.

In the mean while, the fellow had returned to the place where he had left his fair charge, and found her gone ; and thinking she had recovered and run

away, had mounted his horse, and was coming up the road when Henry returned into it—the odds were evidently against him, the fellow being on horse-back and he on foot—but prudence had deserted Henry when he left the prosecution of his journey homewards with Ellen and Will Hurst, and, heated with resentment for the sufferings of Ellen and her father, he rashly exposed his life, for what could be of little service either to himself or them.

CHAP. V.



THE fellow when he saw Henry, conscious of what he had done, and surprised by a man of Henry's appearance, at such a time and place, immediately formed the only opinion which could correspond with his present situation, and seeing Henry preparing to address him, turned his horse's head, and fired—at the same time Henry snapped his pistol, but it missed fire, and the man, setting spurs to his horse, was soon beyond the reach of a second attempt, had Henry been able to make it—he was not—the villain's ball had

passed through his right arm, just above the elbow—the pistol dropped from his hand—he took his handkerchief from his pocket, and, binding up the wound as well as he could, ran, as long as his strength would permit, in hopes of overtaking Will—but his haste only quickened the circulation of his blood, and increased the loss of it, without serving his purpose; he had scarcely reached the common, before he found himself unable to proceed any further; he laid himself on the ground, and taking off his neckcloth, wrapped it tight over the handkerchief, and made a second attempt to proceed: with great difficulty he, at length, reached the bottom of the lane; here he fainted—he recovered again—but so exhausted that he could not rise, and must have

lain there but for Will—who shortly after came riding at full speed, and would have passed him, had not Henry, hearing the horse's feet, called out as well as he could for assistance.

Will stopped his horse, and, seeing Henry on the ground, alighted and went up to him.

“Is it you, Will?” said Henry.

“Yes, Sir,” replied Will: “I hope you are not hurt.”

“I am, indeed, my good fellow—if you are able, get me to your house—I am wounded by a pistol-shot.”

Will's strength and dexterity were the only and the best answer to Henry's request—surprise and concern had shut his lips—but his hands were effectually serviceable.

Henry inquired on the way concern-

ing Ellen, and was informed by Will, that she was very much recovered by the time he got her to his house—that his wife had put her to bed—where he had left her in a fine sleep when he set out to seek him.

“Did you mention my name, Will?”

“I did, Sir, and told her it was your horse she rode on, and that you would be with her presently. She seemed satisfied with that, but was very uneasy afterwards at your delay. I was afraid she would have insisted on knowing the reason of your absence, which, I am sure, would have alarmed her very much ; but soon after she got home, my wife got her to bed, and she went off into a sweet sleep, and, as I said before, Sir, I came away in search of you.”

When they had reached home, Henry desired Will to help him to bed immediately—which being done, Will proposed a surgeon.

“No,” said Henry : “I think, as the wound is well secured by these bandages, sleep will do me more service at present.”

But Will could not be satisfied with Henry’s opinion, and went immediately for the surgeon, who did not live above half a mile from the place.

When the surgeon arrived, Henry was asleep—he was unwilling to disturb him ; but conceiving it absolutely necessary that the wound should be dressed, he set about it—the ball had gone quite through, and the wound appeared of such a nature as would require much time and skill to cure.

The surgeon had taken off the bandages without disturbing him, but in attempting to probe the wound, Henry started and cried out—the surgeon desired Will to hold him, so as to prevent any sudden motion while the probe was in the wound; and so much exhausted was Henry, that he soon after sunk into sleep again. This operation being finished, and the wound dressed and bound up, the surgeon departed, leaving the necessary directions respecting regimen, &c.

It was noon before Ellen awoke.—She was so much restored by sleep, and the expectation of seeing her lover, that she immediately arose, and entered the parlour just as Molly was preparing to set the dinner on the table.

“Lord, Ma’am,” said Molly, “I

declare you quite frighten'd me—well, and how are you ?”

“ I thank you,” replied Ellen, “ I feel very much refreshed.—Pray is Mr. Emersly here ?”

“ Oh yes, he is here,” returned Molly ; and here he is likely to remain.”

“ What did you say ?” said Ellen, hastily.

“ I say, the gentleman you inquire after is very ill.”

At this instant Will came in.

“ Oh, Sir,” cried Ellen, “ is not Mr. Emersly well ?”

Will took hold of her hand—

“ My dear good lady, don't ye be alarmed—Mr. Emersly is asleep—he is not very well, but don't ye be alarmed. Molly, my girl, see that the lady wants

for nothing, while I go to my young master."

"Oh, Sir!" cried Ellen, "may I see him—or—if you please—will you ask him how he is, in my name—tell him——Oh Heaven preserve him!"

By this time Will was half way up stairs, for his heels were always quicker than his ears.

Ellen, in a tremulous voice, addressed Molly again, whose natural temper returned, and now appeared in a very sour countenance.

"Have you, Ma'am—have you seen the gentleman?"

"Oh yes, I have seen him."

"Was he very much fatigued?—Did he look pale?"

"Pale?—Oh Lord, yes, to be sure—why, he has been shot."

Ellen gave a loud shriek, and fainted in the chair ~

“ The Lord bless me—here’ll be a fine to do with this gentleman and lady—and my fool of a husband to take them in—well, he may look to them himself for me—I’ll not be put out of my way for them—what if he did live with his uncle—his penny was earned before he had it, I’ll warrant ; and I see no reason why people, when they have once left masters and mistresses, should be troubled with them afterwards.”

Will, alarmed by the outcry below, came down immediately to know the cause, and met his wife returning with a basin full of water—

“ What is the matter, Molly ?” said Will.

“ Why, the lady has sounded—that’s the matter.”—

“ Ah, Moll ! Moll ! ” said Will ; and snatching the water from her, ran into the parlour with it—but Ellen had recovered without it, and, seeing Will, begged she might be admitted to see Mr. Emersly. “ Why, Ma’am,” said Will, “ he is still asleep, and it would be a pity to disturb him ; but if you desire it, I will show you his room.”

“ I’ll not disturb him, Sir,” replied Ellen.

But the doctor entering at the instant, and assuring her it might be attended with dangerous consequences, she consented to remain below—the doctor himself finding his patient was not awake, did no more than look at him, and leave his medicine.

Henry awoke soon after the doctor was gone, and, after taking his medicine and some weak broth, fell asleep again, and continued to dose all that day—but as night came on, he became restless and feverish—the doctor paid another visit just before supper, and, alarmed at the unfavourable change in his patient, directed the continuation of his fever draughts, and said, it was positively necessary that somebody should attend him all night.

Will, knowing the temper of his wife, thought in point of tenderness, if not of skill, he should be the best nurse of the two; so immediately volunteered his service—the doctor said, it was not material who sat up with him, as nothing more seemed necessary than to administer his draughts at the stated

times, and to be ready, in case of delirium, to prevent his throwing off the bed-clothes, or exposing himself to danger.

With these directions, Will placed himself by the bed-side, and Ellen and his wife went to bed together—but Ellen, whose anxiety kept her awake, had not been in bed an hour, before she heard, in the adjoining room, enough to convince her that the nurse was asleep, however the patient might be—she got up, and, putting on her clothes, went softly into the room, her limbs trembling with fear of being overcome at the sight of Henry—but the first sight that presented itself was poor Will, as sound asleep as Palinurus under the influence of the Stygian bough—the poor fellow, having slept none the night before, and fatigued with the

bustle of the day, had undertaken more than he could perform.

Ellen did not disturb him, but went up to the bed side, and, drawing the curtain, saw Henry with the fever glowing in his face, and his arm bound up beside him—with a heart replete with love and gratitude—secure from the eye of the world, and confident in that of heaven—she kissed his cheek, and bathed his pillow with her tears.

The prayers and watchings of a saint were never performed with more devotion than were Ellen's now—her eyes, alternately fixed on Heaven and Henry, shed tears of piety and love—while every motion and every moan alarmed her tender breast—now she would gently raise his head and shift his pillow, and adjust the clothes which his

restless state disordered—then watch his breathing, and thank kind Heaven for every minute's rest.

Towards the morning Henry awoke—he looked at Ellen, but recognized her as a being merely visionary—with a sudden sense of impropriety, she started from his sight, but a moment's reflection brought her back again—she poured out his medicine, and solicited his consent to take it—he took it, with his eyes fixed on her—he returned the cup, looked wild, and sunk upon his pillow—she took the cup, and burst into tears!

Will, who always awoke at his usual hour, began to rub his eyes, and starting from the chair, and seeing the day break, exclaimed—“Bless my soul!—Oh, hang my sleepy head!”

Ellen, unwilling to be seen by Will, left the room, and slipping off her clothes got into bed.

Will now pulled aside the curtain, and seeing Henry awake, immediately poured out a bottle of his medicine, and bringing it to his bed side, asked him how he did.

“ I am better Will,” replied Henry.

“ Heaven be praised !” said Will—and offered the cup.

“ I have just taken my medicine,” said Henry.

“ Oh, Sir, how can that be—why, who could give it you ?”

“ An angel !” replied Henry.

Will looked at him, and naturally conceiving him to be light headed, drew the curtain, set down the cup, and prepared to act as the doctor had

directed in case of delirium—but before he returned, Henry was asleep again, and remained so when Will was summoned to breakfast by his wife Molly.

“ Well,” said Molly, as they sat down to breakfast, “ what sort of a night had you?”

“ Why, a pretty good one,” replied Will—“ he slept very well.”

“ Ay, and I think if you had been asleep too it would ha’ been full as well for you.”

Will was ashamed to say he had.

“ Why, my dear, what could I do?”

“ Do? you should ha’ done as I told you at first, not ha’ taken them in at all—there’s George Hodges, at the Crown, would not ha’ done it, I know—but you always was a simple fool.”

“ Why, Molly, now, why can’t you be good-tempered?”

“ Ay, good tempered indeed—I have enough to make me good tempered—but this I insist upon, Will, that you go this morning to his father, or his uncle, or whoever he is, and desire him to take them away—for here they shall not stay—there is enough to do without attending upon them day and night.”

“ Why, I was thinking,” replied Will, “it would be best to let Mr. Emersly know where they are, for I dare say he is very uneasy about them, poor gentleman.”

“ Ay, and so am I,” quoth Molly; “and, therefore, the sooner he has them away the better.”

“ Well, my dear, I think so too—but you know it is impossible to move

the young gentleman while he is so bad: I'm sure, I am very uneasy at leaving him, for he was quite light-headed when he waked this morning."

"It does not signify, Will; for I tell you, once for all, here they shall not stay—so get your breakfast, and set off."

Will said no more, but began to prepare for his journey to Elderfield Hall.

Just before he set out, Ellen came down stairs; and hearing that Will was going to Mr. Emersly, requested he would call, in his way, at Hawthorn, to relieve her father from his fears on her account.

* * * * *

When Mr. Emersly acceded to the request of Henry to visit his brother, it was on the condition of his returning

the next day; and as the respect which the reasonableness of Mr. Emersly's injunctions always claimed, and which consistent with that gentleman's notions of tutelary authority, he always exacted, appeared to have been unnecessarily violated by his absence the following day; he began to admit surmises directly opposite to the opinion he had long formed of Henry's character.

Under these impressions he set out for Ashbourne Hall, and was received by the Baronet with all the hypocrisy necessary to the insidious pursuits of such a villain.

His instructions to Sedley had been to have Ellen conveyed to a certain house about ten miles from Ashbourne Hall, where Sedley was to prepare her

for the reception of him the next day, by the most plausible mediatory apologies for the violence she had received, and the most positive assurances of an honourable proposal—a mock marriage was to have been the consequence of her consent, or a philterous infusion, by impairing her reason, to have insured his success without it; but his designs being again frustrated, he resumed the mask, and displayed as much anxiety and surprise at the absence of Henry as Mr. Emersly did.

“When, and upon what occasion, did he leave you?” said Mr. Emersly.

The Baronet, unprepared for a circumstantial inquiry, hesitated a few moments.

“Why, Sir, Mortimer and his daughter had spent the greatest part of the

day here—and were here when my brother arrived—a sudden indisposition, from which I endeavoured to relieve myself by a walk, occasioned my absence, and, in my return home, I met them in company with my brother, whose gallantry, I imagine, had induced him to see the lady safe-housed—thus far, Sir, from my own evidence—the information of my coachman is of a much more serious nature—he arrived yesterday morning, about one o'clock, with the news of their having been attacked by some ruffians, who had wounded Mortimer, and had carried off his daughter—and that my brother had taken his horse in pursuit of them—I should have sent to Mortimer's this morning with a further inquiry: but, positively, so many things have oc-

curred to prevent me, that I am sorry to say I have not yet been able."

"I thank you for your information," said Mr. Emersly: "nothing must prevent *my* going immediately to Mortimer's house."

Mr. Emersly arrived there a short time before Will Hurst; and finding Mortimer in a condition that would not admit of his being disturbed, had satisfied himself, that, so far as respected *him*, the Baronet's account was true—and as no further information could be derived from that quarter, was about to leave it—when Will Hurst arrived.

Will, without any other ceremony than his humble obeisance to an old and worthy master, began his address with, "Heaven bless your honour—I hope

your honour is well—I am sorry to tell your honour that my young master is at our house, the Bell, in Bush-lane, and that he would be glad to see your honour.”

“ I thank you for your trouble, Will; but why should you be sorry to tell me this? or why did he not come to me?”

“ Why, please your honour, he is not very well.”

“ Ah, Will! I feared as much—I will return with you.”

“ Pray, Sir, does one Mr. Mortimer live here?”

“ He does, Will—what is your business with him.?”

“ I was to tell him, Sir, that a young lady at our house desires he will not be uneasy about her.”

Mr. Emersly now began to form some

idea of what had happened; and fearing Henry's illness, like that of Mortimer, might be the consequence of a wound, put the question to Will, and was hastened to his departure by his reluctant answer in the affirmative, having undertaken to deliver Will's message to Mortimer on his return.

CHAP. VI.



MR. EMERSLY found Ellen by the bed-side, who immediately burst into tears—he took her by the hand—

“ Oh, Sir!” cried Ellen, and pointed to the bed.

Mr. Emersly drew the curtain aside—Henry was awake.

“ How do you find yourself, Henry?” said Mr. Emersly.

Henry looked at him wildly.

“ Will you be so good, Sir, as to assist me in putting on my boots—I have asked that woman several times—but she is very ill-natured—she has

used me very ill—very ill indeed, Sir.”

Ellen clasped her hands in silent agony—and Mr. Emersly, seeing him in that delirious state, and Ellen in a state nearly similar, closed the curtain, and began to think of some better mode of attendance.

“My dear,” said he to Ellen, “I think the landlady would be much better able to supply your place here.”

“Oh no, Sir, she is a very ill-tempered woman; and though he says the same of me—he knows not, Sir,—he knows not what he says!”

Mr. Emersly, overcome by the scene before him, turned aside to conceal his emotion.

Having placed Ellen in a chair—he rang for the landlady, of whom he inquired if there were no person near,

that could attend his nephew as a nurse?—Molly considering her ease, or, rather, indulging her temper at the expense of her interest, said, no—but Will, whose tongue was at all times the key to an honest and grateful heart—said, he thought he could get Sally Wood for a few days, as he knew she was out of employ at that time.

Sally Wood was immediately sent for, and hired by Mr. Emersly; and the doctor coming in, some time after, Mr. Emersly expressed a desire to see the wound dressed.

Henry was awake, and somewhat more composed: he knew his uncle, and would have spoken—but the doctor advised him not.

Mr. Emersly was greatly shocked at the wound, and asked the doctor if

he thought any farther assistance necessary—the doctor said, he thought not, the wound was doing very well, and he had no doubt, upon reducing the fever, of making a speedy cure.

Mr. Emersly was satisfied with the doctor's conduct, and, recommending patience to Henry, was about to depart—when Ellen asked him if he had seen her father?—He told her, he had just left him when he met with Will Hurst.

“ Did you leave him well, Sir?”

Mr. Emersly avoided a direct answer, by desiring her to make herself easy with respect to him.

“ Will you be so good, Sir, as to account to him for my absence, and tell him not to trouble himself to come so far as here, as he cannot be of any service—and that if he can spare me,

I should like to remain a few days longer.”

Mr. Emersly promised he would ; and leaving with her a sum of money, desired her to dispose of it as she found occasion.

* * * * *

Mr. Emersly, looked in upon Mortimer, in his way home, and found him sitting in his easy chair taking some broth.

The old man looked up, and, seeing Mr. Emersly, pointed to a chair beside him.

“ Sit down, Sir—pray sit down—you have, no doubt, Sir, heard of my misfortune.”

“ I have, Mortimer.”

“ Ah, Sir !—it has shaken me—it has shaken me !”

“ Well, well, you will recover, Mortimer, you will recover.”

“ I am an old man, Sir, and life or death has been long indifferent to me—my daughter, Sir—my daughter was all I”—

“ Mortimer, your daughter is safe.”

“ Sir ?”

“ Your daughter is safe.”

Mortimer clasped his hands—“ Where is she, Sir ? Where can I find her ?”

Mr. Emersly then informed him of the manner in which she had been recovered—with the unfortunate consequences of it to his nephew—but Mortimer was too weak to support the news—it has appeared before that he was a man of keen sensibility, and the joy, grief, and gratitude, which the recital produced in him, were too much for it.—Mr.

Emersly sat with him till his agitation had subsided, and, promising to see him again shortly, mounted his horse, and returned home.

* * * * *

The satisfaction which, both Henry and Mortimer derived from the respective visits of Mr. Emersly, went far in promoting their recovery—the presence of a good man possessed of means to effect the purposes of his benevolent heart, ensures comfort to all, who are not excluded from it by the obdurate nature of confirmed vice.

But alas! where is human perfection to be found?—Theory may lay down its constituent character, but practice denies it in the best!

The extreme concern and anxiety of Ellen, which Mr. Emersly had wit-

nessed on his first visit to his nephew, though much might be imputed to a principle of gratitude, induced a suspicion in his mind, sufficiently warranted, that love had also its share—he was surprised, and not a little disappointed; but as his good sense and good nature had directed him to a humane consideration of her distress at that time, and the uncertainty of his nephew's life, it was not till the news of Henry's convalescence rendered his recovery no longer doubtful, and his return home determined on, that the further consideration of it was thought necessary.

Mr. Emersly was a humane, good man; and it was not till circumstances exposed the latent infirmity, that his attachment to family distinction ap-

peared to cast a shade over the general brightness of his character.

A few days previous to the expected arrival of Henry, he invited an old friend to dine with him, who had formerly been in the capacity of tutor to the young Baronet, and had since assisted him in the education of Henry.

This gentleman, whose name was Richardson, was a man in whom Nature seemed to smile at the frowns of Fortune ; she had endowed him with talents extensively useful, and had stamped them genuine with the seal of modesty

To this gentleman Mr. Emersly always applied in cases where the consequences were likely to warrant the consultation ; for though, in ordinary matters, his judgment was the result of impartial consideration, he was well

aware, that in certain points every man had his prejudice, and, consequently, his liability to error ; and as no one could be more diffident of his opinion than he was himself, he chose, in an affair so material to the happiness of his nephew, to defer its reduction to practice, till the propriety of it should be sanctioned by the concurrence of Mr. Richardson's sentiments.

Mr. Emersly, having opened the subject, and stated the circumstances of the parties, proceeded to the question, saying, " When I request your advice, Mr. Richardson, I expect your opinion ; which, though it may differ from mine, may still be right, and supported by argument, may bring conviction."

" It seems, Sir," replied Mr. Richardson, " that your only objection is

on the score of family and fortune,—
With respect to family, I still entertain the long-exploded notion, that there is really but one—the collateral branches of which, however distinguished by circumstances, can be no otherwise disqualified for union, than by the moral incongruity of virtue with vice—you acknowledge virtue and good sense in both, and that no other impediment exists, than is attributed to the inequality of their birth—in Spain, Sir, the validity of it might be less questionable—but how easily obviated here—Clothe virtue and good sense in all the elegance wealth can bestow, and nothing more is necessary than a little modish instruction, to complete the character of a British lady.”

“ But do you not think, Sir,” re-

plied Mr. Emersly," that it would be imprudent to unite the rich with the poor?"

"In my opinion, not at all, so far as it does not combine the heterogeneous natures of virtue and vice."

"Well, Mr. Richardson, your arguments have some cogency, I must allow; but let us consider the consequences of introducing the relative members of the family; we will admit the introduction of the principal to be sufficiently warranted, by virtue and good sense (and surely something like a competency, on one side at least, must be understood); but how are the deficiencies of the two former qualifications to be supplied in the other branches of it."

"Exclude those of exceptionable

character, and cultivate and encourage the good qualities of those who are not so—were this mode of conduct more generally adopted, it would produce a discrimination so distinct, as would go far towards a general reformation of manners—wealth would then find the appropriate object of its power, and the diffusion of its influence concur with its premiary nature in the promotion of virtue. Do not, Sir, think me a *leveller* ; there cannot be a more strenuous advocate than myself for gradations in society ; but if, as is universally allowed, virtue alone be true nobility, surely I am not arguing on a false principle.

“ But, Sir, in the case before us, the circumstances of the parties are particularly serious—A young man, whose

education has taught him the excellence of virtue, and whose experience has taught him the truth of it, in the intimacy and tender attachment of a beautiful young woman, under circumstances so inimical to views of future interest as rendered even hope absurd, upon the unexpected restoration of his health, feels himself bound by ties of love and gratitude to an equitable return.—Here, Sir, common justice, it should seem, would warrant his inclination; but should it appear, that previous circumstances had induced a passion in his breast equivalent to love, and her concern for him to be the result of his own solicitation—I need but to appeal to your own heart for the justification of his—Love, Sir, is a passion not to be trifled with”——.

“ Very true, very true,” interrupted Mr. Emersly: “ and really, I have no other objection to the encouragement of Henry’s passion for this young woman, but that their circumstances in life are so *very* disproportionate; and even that objection should give way to their inclination, were it not for the reflection that would be thrown upon my conduct by the family.”

“ Such conduct, Sir, needs shrink from no reflection—and, as I was about to observe, that love is a passion not to be trifled with, I request your attention to a few observations on the nature of it :—

“ Unerring Wisdom and Goodness implanted the seeds of love in the human breast, not only to unite the sexes, but to make their union happy.

“ In the course of time, the situations of either sex became various and unequal: had love then changed its nature, it had continued a general and invariable blessing to mankind in every station ; but amidst the fluctuations and vicissitudes of human affairs, love remained immutable as its divine Author—Generous and indiscriminating, whatever object gave it birth, inferior or superior, the attachment was formed, and heartfelt sorrow the certain consequence of separation.

“ Thus did love become the source of pain or pleasure circumstantially; controlled by lucrative interests, its liberality is lost; and instances daily occur, of avarice or ambition presenting at the altar the hand and heart more a sacrifice than a gift.

“ Such, Sir, is its general nature—let us now consider it with respect to its latent operations in those whose virtuous principles, refined sentiments, and acute sensibility, render them most exposed to its influence.

“ In persons of this description, and where circumstances are favourable, love is an anticipation of heaven—but in a state destitute of hope, or where the beloved object is placed beyond the reach of communication—Love, which was before a source of supreme happiness, is now converted to its opposite—a kind of apathy steals upon the mind—vivacity is extinguished—the senses are affected with indifference, and the soul becomes immersed in ideal contemplation.—*Fancy*, the vagrant child of *Will*, now acts the soul’s pur-

veyor, flies retrograde from scene to scene of happiness elapsed, and for her consolation and support ranges through all that *Memory* points out, while she, unwisely busy, compares the past with the present, and infers the future clouded with the gloom of despondency !”

“ Mr. Richardson, I once in my lifetime experienced a something like what you have just described ;” (he dropped a tear, as he raised the glass to his mouth) “ but I look upon it as the weakness of youth, Mr. Richardson—a weakness which a longer acquaintance with the world is sure to eradicate.”

“ Sir,” replied Mr. Richardson, “ it is a weakness worthy of our nature, it is a significant criterion of humanity—I know it is usual with certain persons,

distinguished for what is termed a regular and discreet line of conduct, to express much surprise at the serious consequences of a passion so trifling to their conception as never to be thought of, but as a subject of ridicule—but, let me tell them, it is a passion of extreme power; and though its operations, depending so materially on circumstances, are not always similar, that they are irresistible in many, the numerous instances of love-distracted suicides and insanities amply evince; unable to endure their pressure, they have, at last, sunk under them!”

“ Well, Sir,” said Mr. Emersly, “ you have said much to the purpose, and I thank you; but I hope my nephew is not so desperately involved, as to be subject to consequences of such a na-

ture; for the loss of life or reason there can be no equivalent in this world; and, therefore, to risk either, for mere matters of opinion (which, I must confess, is nearly as much as can be said of the objections I have urged), would be farthest from my intention in any case; but I think we are not yet so seriously circumstanced; and though attachments of this kind are, as you observe, often material in their consequences, if confirmed by time; so are their consequences as immaterial, when time and absence unite in the dissolution of them."

Mr. Richardson bowed to Mr. Emersly's opinion—and, after some general conversation, took his leave.

The convalescent state of Henry made daily advances to a perfect restoration of health, while the renewal of his passion, strengthened by the many occasional instances of affection on the part of Ellen, co-operated in an eminent degree.

It is an old observation, that “the days of courtship are the happiest of our lives”—they are, at least, a part of them, and the present situation of our lovers afforded them many opportunities of proving its truth.

Nature had begun to deck her vegetable progeny in hues so grateful to the sense of love, that further inspiration seemed unnecessary to the purpose of Henry, in promoting his amorous suit.

Secreted by the lonely woods and walks from the intrusive eye and ear of

strangers, their confidence increased, and their conversation warmed; while Henry, with a mind fertile in apt allusions, alternately descanted on the beauties of Nature and of his mistress—from the pied daisy to the blushing rose, each flower, in itself distinctly perfect, supplied a subject to the inventive mind of Henry from which to compliment the perfections of his lovely Ellen.

It was on their return from one of these delightful perambulations that Henry found a letter from his uncle, informing him that the carriage would be sent the next morning, in which he was desired to return to Elderfield.

The reasoning of Mr. Richardson had, for a time, suspended the determination of Mr. Emersly; but the ob-

jections he had before conceived recurred again with such force as not to be overcome either by his own usual good sense, or that of the former gentleman; and as he apprehended the truth of Mr. Richardson's remarks on the consequences of these tender attachments, he was resolved to prevent the further confirmation of this, by an immediate separation of the parties.

Mr. Emersly's age had not entirely deprived him of his former sensibility, nor was this resolution carried into effect without some degree of violence to his feelings; but, as in the characters of the best of men there is always some trait to evince the infirmity of their nature, that of family pride, as we have observed before, constituted the imbecility of Mr. Emersly's

When Henry had read the letter, conceiving by the manner in which he found *himself* affected by its contents, that they would be no less distressing to Ellen, he deferred the communication of them till the next morning; when, a short time before the carriage arrived, he produced the letter, which, having read, she returned to him.

“ I shall be prepared to accompany you, Sir, in a few minutes, if you will have the goodness to leave me, in your way, at my father’s ”—and immediately retired to her chamber.

Henry knew too well the absolute temper of his uncle, to expect that any thing but real inability would excuse the smallest disobedience or delay; a few moments, therefore, sufficed for his determination.

Ellen had left him, as he thought, to prepare for their departure—the carriage soon after arriving, he ran up stairs, and found her, with her handkerchief to her face, and her tears falling from under it.

“ In tears, Miss Mortimer?”

“ No, Sir.”

“ You are not well?”

“ Yes, Sir, I am very well—I am ready, Sir—I am ready to go !”

Henry’s feelings were too much like her own to admit of reasoning with her—he seized her hand, and, kissing it with unusual ardour, led her to the carriage:—then having despatched Will for his trunks, and satisfied his wife for her *civility*, directed the disposal of his baggage, and left Will with a sincere earnest of his future notice in a

professed acknowledgment that he deserved it.

The conversation of the lovers on their way consisted in consolatory vows of mutual constancy, and the consideration of means most likely to preserve their future correspondence.

Henry knew, on his part, that it must be managed clandestinely, at least for a time; and as there was little probability of his being near Hawthorn, but when on a visit to Ashbourne Hall, and opportunities of interview even then uncertain, proposed the mediation of his brother, who, young like themselves, he thought would be likely to view their connexion with a sympathetic interest.

Henry was a stranger to his brother's designs, and Ellen (for her father's sake) had discreetly reserved to some future

time the assertion of her suspicions; but the proposing him as a confidant induced a positive objection on her part, which she politically founded on the plea of delicacy,

“ One gentleman the confidant of another must naturally excite diffidence in an object so humble as a cottage-girl.”

“ A cottage-girl?” replied Henry, hastily; “and can the humility of Miss Mortimer consent to *local* degradation?”

“ Yes, Sir ” replied Ellen, “common observation has taught me, that *place* is every thing in this world!”

“ Are you serious, Miss Mortimer?—and can you so connect the idea of Harry Emersly with that of the world, as to infer that his suggestions are in-

sidious, or would be inimical to your happiness?"

"Oh, Sir, Heaven forbid I should—I have too much reason to hope they are not—I—Oh my heart!"—she fell upon his neck—he felt her tears on his breast—she raised her head—and started to the opposite seat—she blushed—she hid her face—the coach stopped, as had been desired, at the top of the path which led to the cottage—her agony increased—she clasped his hand—"Do not forget—do not despise me!"

CHAP. VII.

ELLEN hastened to the arms of Mortimer, who met her embrace with the fond affection of a parent—his tears expressed his joy beyond the power of words—a transient flush suffused his aged cheeks—he smiled and wept by turns—

“ Ellen!—my girl!—” he pressed her to his bosom—“ I am glad to see thee.”

“ Oh, father!—how have you been ?”

“ I don’t know, child, I *have been* better than I *am*—come, sit thee down, my girl—never mind how an *old* man does.”

“ Sir?”

Ellen, conscious that she had in some degree sacrificed her duty to her father to her love for Henry, blushed, and, by her silence, acknowledged her transgression.

“ And how did you leave the young squire ?”

“ Much better, Sir.”

“ When does he return to Elderfield ?”

“ The carriage was sent for him this morning.”

“ And where did he leave you ?”

“ Why, Sir, I came with him in the carriage as far as the top of the hill.”

“ So nigh, and not look in—Well—it would have been more friendly to have said, ‘ How are you Mortimer ?’—Ellen, my dear, reach my cap—I shall see no more visitors to-day.”

It was her usual business—she reached the cap, and was about to put it on his head, when seeing it covered with a number of recent scars, some of which were scarcely healed, she started—

“ Oh, Sir!—what has happened?—Your head has been very much hurt!”

Mortimer took her hand—

“ Sit down my girl.—Is this strange to you, Ellen?”

“ Oh, Sir—I never had the least idea of your situation till now—my information from Mr. Emersly removed from my mind all doubt of your health or apprehension of your anxiety.”

“ I am glad to hear it.”

Mortimer then informed her of all that had happened from the time of their separation, and concluded with saying—“ It will most likely shorten

my days, Ellen—but it is no small consolation to find—that you have not deserted me.”

“ Oh, Sir ! what can you mean ? ”

„ It seemed so Ellen—it seemed so—I was on a sick-bed—but ’tis no matter—I am very weak—I am very childish—I wished to have seen you by my bedside—I had much to say to you—I—(he took her hand again)—Ellen—I shall not be with you long—I feel the decay of nature very sensibly, and for the short time I *may* live—don’t desert me.—(his tears stopped him)—I am not your natural father”——“ Oh, sir I have none but you”——“ But I have done a father’s duty—I have cherished you in infancy—I have instructed your riper years to the best of my judgment, and I would secure your future happi-

ness as the end of my endeavours—answer me this single question, and I conjure you to answer it faithfully—is there any serious foundation for your attachment to the young squire?”

“ Attachment, Sir?”

“ Don’t hesitate, Ellen.”

“ Sir, I wished to have concealed what is, perhaps, the mere illusion of my senses—I have seen—I have heard Mr. Emersly ; and to deny an attachment I am unable to resist, would be an unnecessary instance of deception—my father can never wish my happiness, and oppose the means so likely to promote it—Oh, Sir, I am very unhappy—I cannot express the state of my mind—it is so divided, I am not myself—when I think of my obligations to *you*, I am surprised that my affec-

tion should incline to any other object—when I think of Mr. Emersly—I burst into tears, and doubt the propriety of them—it is for you to determine whether I should encourage, what, alas! it is out of my power to avoid.”

“ Is your reliance on my advice sincere,” replied Mortimer, “ or is it merely a compliment that means nothing? If it be sincere, Ellen, let me advise you to consider well the consequences of an attachment so likely to end in disappointment and distress.

“ Mr. Emersly is born to an ample fortune—we are dependant on our daily labour for our daily bread ; and rely upon the truth of my opinion, Ellen, that, however blind may be the passion of Love, the eyes of the world are open to its consequences—Avarice or Ambi-

tion will oppose its tender interests; and though the fidelity of him you love may effect the consummation of your hopes, yet—the dreams of Love will vanish—adversities will sour the temper—and the man who once adored may become a stranger to you—think of these things, my child, and be wise in time.”

The observations of Mortimer had their due influence on Ellen’s mind all that day; during which time, by an unremitted attention to her domestic concerns, she endeavoured to obliterate the memory of a passion so unfortunately placed—but alas! the night came—and with it, a disposition to thought—no longer occupied by that variety of objects which the day produced, her mind reverted to the scenes.

of Love, and her heart thrilled with a renewal of the sensations that accompanied them—in vain did reason object the disparity of circumstances—the decisive influence of Nature determined her consent to the truths she *felt*, and the consideration of future consequences was deferred to a future time.

* * * * *

Several days had elapsed, and each a day of disappointment to Ellen's expectations, when she was agreeably surprised, one morning, by the arrival of Will Hurst and a letter.

Anxious to know the contents of it, and distressed by the repeated expressions of good will from the bearer, she scarcely pressed his stay, and was somewhat disappointed by his acceptance of a little refreshment—his inquiries were

hastily answered, and his thanks not heard—such was the impatience of Ellen to know what her lover could say at a distance.

“ Well, Miss,” said Will, after having drank his ale, “ I must be going.”

“ Why, you have a long way to go, Sir.”

“ Ah, bless you, Miss—and my wife, she always thinks me long when I am from home—why now, there was the other day”——

“ Ay,” interrupted Ellen dreading a long story, “ I dare say, poor woman, she has more than enough to do—well, I am very much obliged to you, Sir, for your trouble, and pray remember me to Mrs. Hurst.”

“ That I will, Miss, with all my heart—she is an industrious, pains-ta-

king woman, Miss,—to be sure, sometimes she gets out of temper, but we must put up with it, as I say—for when one is married, why there's always something happening—sometimes *one* is crost, and sometimes the *other* is crost, and then the children—why, there's our eldest boy, Miss—last week he got into Squire Hale's orchard"—

“ Bless me,” cried Ellen, “ there's our foolish girl has gone away, and left the dairy open—well, good day to you, Mr. Hurst, and pray call in whenever you come this way.”

Will promised he would ; and, though a little disappointed in losing his tale, with the utmost good nature in his countenance, wished her good morning and mounting his horse, left her at liberty to retire to her chamber, whither

she immediately went, and opening the letter read as follows :—

“ DEAR MISS MORTIMER,

“ The honest friendship of Will Hurst has brought him this evening to Elderfield to inquire after my health, and I hasten to embrace the opportunity of his return to inform you of what has happened since we parted.

“ Oh, Miss Mortimer ! just as I had attained nearly the summit of my wishes—your consent to my passion—to have all my hopes and expectations baffled in an instant by the erroneous conceptions of others—to plead reason, and be opposed by folly—to—but I will tell you—

“ I was received by my uncle with the usual welcome—he is a good man, and my happiness, I know, is the ulti-

mate object of his designs—but, alas ! he is mistaken in the nature of it.

“ The morning after I arrived, he desired that I would attend him in his study—we were no sooner seated, than, ‘ Henry,’ said he, ‘ you are now of an age to think and act for yourself, and the instruction you have received will, I trust, direct your thoughts and actions to the advancement of your real happiness—a longer acquaintance with the world will expose to your observation the fallacy of those pursuits in which the youthful mind too generally exhausts those energies which nature has designed for more important purposes. I do not mean to warn you against pursuits absolutely vicious—I trust it is not necessary—but yours, Harry, is an age when the inordinacy of the pas-

sions requires the utmost exertion of reason, to restrain and qualify their predominance; and to assist its exertion, I would advise you to turn your mind to some course of employment, in which its faculties may be so engaged as to leave it less liable to the undue influence of them.

“ ‘ I have written to an old friend at Alicant, whose mercantile knowledge will be amply sufficient for your instruction as a merchant.’

“ ‘ Alicant ! Sir’ I exclaimed. (Oh, Miss Mortimer, how can I describe what I felt at the idea of such a distance.) ‘ Alicant Sir ? What should I do at Alicant ?—have I not life, health, and happiness here ?—What should I do at Alicant ?’—To see a frown on that face so accustomed to bear the

character of benignity, surprised me—I arose—‘ Sir,’ said I, ‘ are you serious?’—He looked at me—‘ Can that be questionable, young man,’ replied he, ‘ on so serious a subject?—You seem to have forgotten who I am—I shall leave you to recollect yourself.’

“ He left the room in anger, and I remained in the most deplorable state of surprise and conjecture at such a revolution of temper in one whom I had always been accustomed to look upon, as superior to passion as heaven is to earth.

“ That day I saw him no more ; the next day I dined with him, but his discourse was cold and indifferent ! the day after, I was very much relieved by the company of Mr. Richardson, who dined with us, and, by his general

knowledge and his gentle manners, seemed to restore us to ourselves again.

“ My uncle appearing daily to resume his usual countenance, I began to congratulate myself on a restoration to favour—but was very soon convinced, that his inflexibility remained.

“ Yesterday he dined with Mr. Richardson, and upon his return home found me writing the former part of this letter.

“ ‘ Who are you writing to, Henry ?’ said he.

“ I hesitated—the truth faltered on my tongue—‘ To my brother, Sir.’

“ ‘ To your brother ?’ replied he ; ‘ then add a postscript, thanking him for assisting Mr. Richardson in procuring a vessel for your conveyance to Alicant.’

“ ‘ Thank him, Sir ?—Thank him for assisting to make me wretched ?’

“ ‘ Every thing is arranged for your departure this day week, and Mr. Richardson has kindly undertaken to see you settled in the house of Messrs. Melmoth.’

“ Oh, Miss Mortimer ! what can I say—what can I offer that may obviate a determination so positive, without violating the necessary principle of gratitude—or *may* such a sacrifice be made to *Love* ?” —

When Ellen had read the letter, every line of which was an alarm to her feelings, a profusion of tears succeeded—her father’s words occurred to her memory, and the truth of them came home to her bosom—the desertion of hope left a vacancy of mind which she

endeavoured to supply with reason ; but the attempt was fruitless, and she submitted to her adverse fate as to the penalty of a presumptuous passion—Reflection on her former state increased her sense of present misery, and many a sigh and many a tear accompanied the recollection of those serene days, when every act of filial piety was crowned with joy and peace, and every care was ended by the setting sun.

CHAP. VIII.



ELLEN, unwilling to wound her father's feelings, which at all times had a natural sympathy with her own, endeavoured to conceal her melancholy, and her meek and patient spirit had for some days enabled her to attempt it with some success; when, one day, as she was preparing for his return from market, where he had been with a few samples of wheat—he came in, and sitting down, said, with an inadvertence natural to oblivious age—

“ I have just now, in my way home, seen the Baronet and his brother, and I

believe unobserved, though they appeared to be coming this way—the Baronet looked cheerful and well, but I scarcely knew the young squire again, he is so much altered for the worse—his eyes and his temples are so sunk, and his face so”——“Oh, Sir.” interrupted Ellen, “spare the description!”—she burst into tears—those feelings which had been so long repressed operated with redoubled energy in her tender heart, and her whole frame was shaken with the most passionate distress.

She had scarcely recovered when the Baronet and his brother were seen at the gate—Mortimer went to receive them, and Ellen retired to prepare for, what she expected to be her last interview with Henry.

Having changed her dress, she endeavoured to compose her hurried spirits, and to obtain from reason the effect of hope: but this, like the former essay, failing, with a heart depressed and a desponding mind, she returned to the parlour, and in her way saw her father and the Baronet walking in the garden.

At the sight of Henry, her eyes resumed their former fire, while her perturbed bosom, heaving, met his embrace with all the warmth of genuine love.

“ I think, Sir,” said Ellen, “ the state of your health has not been much improved since I saw you last.”

“ ’Tis much worse, Miss Mortimer,” replied Henry, “ much worse—you received my letter I presume, and are acquainted with its contents.”

Ellen answered with her tears.

Henry took her hand, and kissing it—

“ Oh, my Ellen,” he exclaimed, “ Fortune opposes our happiness to assert her power; submit but for a time, and Love will evince his just supremacy—if Love be the foundation of our hopes, they have Nature for their basis, and they must endure—shall then the time ever come, when those eyes shall be averted at my approach, and those smiles of approbation, the happy influence of which I have so often experienced, be transferred to a happier object—Oh! Miss Mortimer, shall this ever be?”

“ Can such a question be necessary, Sir?—where you have placed your affection, bestow your confidence—I once

flattered myself with the possession of it, —but I have suffered for my presumption, and only beg my feelings may not be sported with.”

“ Can Miss Mortimer suppose me capable of it—look, and say, if in my countenance there is any indication of the levity you suspect—No, Miss Mortimer, the purpose of my visit is of a very different nature—as my departure is, I understand, fixed for to-morrow, it is my wish to provide against the probable adversity of future events.

“ My uncle, I have reason to suppose, is acquainted with the nature of our intimacy, and is, unfortunately, averse to it; the situation of your father renders him subject to the influence of my uncle and my mother, whose visionary notions of distinction

may induce them to insist on such a mode of coercion on his part, as may tend to deprive me of all that is essential to my happiness.

“ A system of opposition so formidable to my hopes as that which is likely to be adopted by them in my absence, has excited a degree of desperation in my attempt to resist it; permit me to exact a serious affirmation of your constancy, and in return I swear, by all that can render my profession sacred, never to violate this pledge of faith”—he seized her hand, and pressed it to his breast—he gazed on her lovely eyes—“ Oh, my Ellen, these liberties I take, and think my title fair—say, shall any future circumstance invalidate my right?”—Ellen turned her

eyes towards heaven, and then on Henry. "It never shall!"

Replete with nature, her freed heart divulged its affection, while her eyes confirmed its truth with tears.

"Sanctioned by the voice of Nature," said the enraptured youth, "what can add to the perfection of our vows but the establishment of a correspondence so certain and sincere as may aid their stability by the sweet interchange of sentiment; this I have provided for, by confidentially imparting to my brother all that seemed necessary to my purpose, and requesting his mediation, that through him our correspondence may be promoted, and the earliest intimation given of what the adverse parties may resolve on."

At the instant that Ellen was going to remonstrate, the Baronet entered alone.

Henry started up, and presenting Ellen to his brother—

“ Sir William,” said he, “ I here consign to your charge the adored object of my affection, and trust to your love as a brother, and to your honour as a man, for the faithful discharge of the obligations you have entered into.”

The Baronet hypocritically sighed; and, expressing the greatest regret at the necessity of such a consignment, assured him, that the amiable perfections of his charge were a sufficient bond for the preservation of it.

The anxiety of Ellen was too visible to escape the notice of Henry—he

thanked the Baronet for the apparent sincerity of his professions, and requested he might wait his return from Mr. Richardson's to whom they had undertaken to deliver a card of invitation for the evening's entertainment at Ashbourne Hall.

The Baronet readily assenting to his brother's inclination, complied with his request, and promised to look in for him on his return.

The lovers now again sat down to their amorous parley; and as their time was to be short, their discourse was to the purpose. But as the conversation of lovers afford little interest but to the parties themselves, a verbatim recital of it may be thought an intrusion on the reader's patience, it shall, therefore suffice to say, that they recog-

nised the past, and determined the future—they mutually explored each other's heart, and derived the conviction of a correspondent sympathy—their doubts were removed by professions of fidelity, and their fears obviated by a mutual resolution to withstand the cause of them—and as every vow required oscular confirmation, every minute produced the necessity of a new vow, till they were interrupted by the entrance of Mortimer, who having met the Baronet on his departure, had attended him to the gate, and now informed Henry that his brother had altered his intention of returning thither, and should take a nearer road home from Mr. Richardson's; and observing Henry to sit at an unfurnished

table, he desired Ellen to set some of their best ale on it.

“ And so, Sir” said Mortimer, “ the Baronet tells me that your uncle has determined to send you to the southward, ‘ Ah, Sir William’ (said I), ‘ they tell me that the air of Spain, and such places, are so necessary to the restoration of health—but I have my doubts—I have been in various climates, hot and cold, and always found that the best that was most like my own.”

“ But it appears, Mortimer, that my health is not the only object—I am to be qualified for business, although, by my father’s will, I am to inherit a handsome competency at the age of twenty one, besides the expectations founded on my uncle’s promises.”

“Well, well, Sir” replied Mortimer, “then there is a better reason—you must see the world before you can know it, and a knowledge of the world is necessary to the disposal of your wealth—without this kind of knowledge your riches cannot ensure your independence—money is the prey of every knave, and till you know the value of the one, and the villany of the other, your property is more in the power of fortune than your own—but I, perhaps, err in offering my sentiments so freely.”

“Mortimer, I thank you, for I believe what you say is, at least, well meant—but, for the world, I fear *my* acquaintance with it will be but for a short time—Oh, Mortimer, it cannot be long but in the hope of”—Ellen touched his toe with her foot—the hint was taken, and

Mortimer was left to the recollection of circumstances that explained the rest—he looked at Ellen—he arose, and taking Henry's hand, "This must not be, Sir—this must not be."

"What, Mortimer, are you against us? Have you a course of argument to oppose to Love?"

"Oh Sir," replied Mortimer "you honour me by your attention to my daughter—but I feel an obligation to your uncle which exacts a grateful obedience to his will. Should I encourage or connive at an attachment which he would disapprove—consider, Sir—consider, I am poor and old—my poverty would subject me to the imputation of design, and my age would be dishonoured by contempt."

Henry took the old man's hand—

“Mortimer” said he, “I am satisfied—you are as much my friend as you ought to be—when I return, you shall be my father.”

Mortimer shook his head, and smiled—Ellen gave a sigh—and Henry, in a farewell glass having drank to the health and happiness of both, arose to depart.

If the presence of Mortimer had been at any time unwelcome to the lovers, how much more so was it now—when to express the fulness of their hearts was so necessary to the relief of them.

In vain did Henry press Mortimer to his seat—the old man felt likewise a degree of anxiety on the occasion, which though not so exquisite as that of Love—yet was such as led him to the outer gate before he could be pre-

vailed upon to bid a last farewell to Henry—it came from his heart, and with evident emotions of affectionate respect.

Henry thanked his old friend, and assured him, that as his welfare depended principally on his hopes respecting his daughter, it was very much in his power to contribute to it—and having embraced his dear Ellen—he left the cottage of Hawthorn—resigning its virtuous possessors to the care of heaven, and himself to his future destiny.

But he had not gone many paces before he heard a pit-pat step behind him—and turning round, received in his arms the dear girl, almost breathless, who having replaced her father in his chair, had hastened after Henry to exonerate her bosom.

Ellen had again failed in her endeavour to preserve the dignity of her sex—Love bore too heavily on her heart for her to resist this humiliating effort for relief—she looked in his face—

“ And can you leave me ? ”

“ My angel ! ” replied Henry, “ heaven knows with what reluctance ! ”

“ Can you leave me thus ? ”

“ What would you have me do ? ”

“ Alas ! — I know not what — my heart is so opprest — I cannot live — Oh heavens ! ” — she fainted in his arms.

On her recovering, she requested he would lead her home.

“ It may trespass on more important engagements ” said the heart-broken maid, “ but ” — — — “ Oh Miss Mortimer ” replied Henry, “ what can you allude to — what part of my conduct

can have been so exceptionable, as to induce you to form a supposition so ungenerous—Trespass on more important engagements?—need I again invoke heaven to witness the truth of my former protestations?—or can the world produce to *my* notice an object more important than yourself?”

Ellen sighed—the absence of Henry was to her the absence of hope—the former suggestions of Mortimer, conjoined with the consciousness of her inferior fortune, had attached such a degree of doubt to the departure of her lover, as rendered a repetition of his vows necessary to her comfort.

“ And will it always be so—and shall the idea of so humble an object as Ellen Mortimer resist the influence of foreign wealth and beauty ?—Oh, my Henry !”

(she threw herself into his arms)—“ I am wholly thine—I gave my heart—it was all I had to give—you have thought it worthy of your acceptance, and the preservation of it will be most dear to me—should you reject it—it may beat a little longer to the sorrows of its humble mistress,—and then to rest, with all its other cares !”

There is often a promptness of thought and expression which avails a man in cases of little moment, the want of which in more important predicaments as often leaves the party in a state of embarrassed perplexity.—Such was Henry’s case at this instant—he stood confounded—the idea of leaving so beautiful an object in doubt and distress, whose sole happiness was confes-

sedly centered in him, and at the same time of leaving all that constituted his own felicity, precluded every other idea—and when, at last, his thoughts returned to their accustomed course, they offered but a repetition of his former remonstrances.

“Is then” said he “my honour become so degraded in your estimation as to be questionable at such a time as this?—Oh, Miss Mortimer—that I must term you cruel, at a time when your kindness is so necessary to my future peace—when your last words should bid repose to the ‘disconsolate heart of him who adores you—what can assure you of his fidelity who has in vain called heaven to witness it?’”——The sudden inattention of Ellen suspended

any further appeal, and the alarmed lover accompanied his thoughtful mistress to the garden gate.

Ellen made a sudden stop, and catching his hand, fixed her eyes on the ground, and then on him, and then looked to heaven, and then on him again—she paused—she sighed—she languished on him—but it was with that kind of wild affection which betrays despair.

“Wait till I return,” said she.

She entered the gate—then stopped—she came back—she saw his hands clasped, and raised to heaven—she believed him sincere, and re-entered the gate—Henry followed a few paces—he saw her pass through the serpentine avenue that led to the house, and all his ambition centered within its rural confines.

“Happy dwelling!” said the ena-

moured youth “ where Peace resides : —enriched with calm Content, long may Oppression withhold its sacrilegious hand from thy annoyance.—Why must I leave thee, and for what?—for a world whose giddy vortex attracts, and then ingulphs, the whole of real bliss ; ejecting fictitious semblances of happiness to allure its unwary and deluded votaries ! ”

The return of Ellen interrupted the progress of his thoughts, which now were wholly occupied by the expectation of her last adieu !

In her return from the house, he observed her to fix her eyes on something which seemed to interest her feelings—as she approached the gate, he saw it was a picture set in pearls—she hung it on his neck.

“What is this, my angel?”

“It is the picture of my mother” she replied, “and has been said to resemble me.”

“Your mother?—Good heaven!—Is not Mortimer, then, your father?”

“Oh! heaven preserve him!—he is more—but I hear him call—should we meet again, this mystery shall be explained—should we not meet again!—this is my mother’s picture—it has my youth—my features—every thing but my dress—and Oh! may it preserve in your mind the memory of her unfortunate daughter!”—She again burst into tears—he seized her hand—their last embrace was lost in mutual agony!—divided by their adverse destiny, they looked a last farewell, and parted—

Ellen to her father—and Henry to the family at Ashbourne.

Every thing being ready for his departure—he, the next morning, took an affectionate leave of his uncle, who, with real concern, expressed his wishes for his future welfare, and promised him an unlimited support in the promotion of it.

His mother's caresses and concern, appearing more like a tribute to decency than the effusions of natural affection, were returned by that kind of attention which has more of education than nature in it.

As he had a very serious interest in his brother's future conduct, he was inclined to give him credit for as much sincerity in his adieu as he made appear in his promises, which went so far as to

assure him, that he would concur in every wish or desire which it might then, or at any future time, be in his power to assist him in the accomplishment of.

“Be kind to your lovely charge,” were the last words, and only answer Henry made to the professions of his brother.

It may seem strange to the reader, that in the course of Ellen's intimacy with young Emersly, she had never informed him of the circumstances of her adoption; but, from a principle of gratitude, she hesitated at lessening the consequence of her benefactor to exalt her own.—With respect to Mortimer, she knew she was the pride of his heart; and as he had been to her all that the

best of fathers could be, she thought he had a just claim to that tender title.—With respect to herself, she had no expectation or hope of being restored to her natural parents, supposing them alive; and from the circumstances of her story, she had no reason to suppose even that. She knew likewise, that the prudence of Mortimer had concealed her real parentage, or rather her adoption, from all but Sir William, to prevent the invidious sneers and malignant misconstructions of the illiberal multitude—it had been entrusted to Sir William himself as a secret, and she had every reason to believe it had been buried with him—Henry was her lover, but he had avowed his love for her as Mortimer's daughter, and there was no necessity that he should know her as

any other—but as love as well as war requires policy in the conduct of it, she had in this last instance given him reason to suspect more than he knew, and had left his suspicion unresolved, conceiving it might act on his pride, at least, as a retaining balance, when the long absence of all that had induced his attachment, and the flatteries of a gay world, might render such a counterpoise necessary.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

PART II.



CHAP. VI.

IN estimating the character of a scoundrel, we would allow for the ordinary drawbacks of human infirmity, and stamp it current only on that solid principle of vice which will admit of no analysis.

The candid reader will conceive it difficult to produce an instance that may verify the existence of a scoundrel by such a mode of estimation ; but we presume the character will be nearly made out to him, on a further acquaintance with Sir William Emersly—his

general countenance is the mask of simulation—his hand to an open friend the pledge of treachery—when he speaks, it is the violation of truth—when he thinks, it is the conception of sin !

Impelled by that demoniacal principle which cannot be extenuated by any moral resolution into human weakness, or accounted for by any intemperature of human blood, Sir William could wait the slow effects of base insinuation for the accomplishment of his sordid villainy. Free by the absence of his brother and entitled by his brother's confidence to the confidence of Ellen, he felt the advantage it gave him ; and with a mind determined against the recoils of conscience, he again employed the fertile brain of Sedley,

and adopted, with the coolest deliberation suggestions, which the heart of Sedley himself seemed to shrink from, when he considered the consequences they involved.

But in this business of exquisite wickedness Sedley was but his dupe ; his ultimate plan had been long formed, and he only needed the agency of Sedley for its execution.

Were this a representation purely romantic, it might be justly considered as a mere presumptive essay on the sensibility of the reader ; but the depravity of this enlightened age, this awful age of *Illuminism* ! may rescue the author from the charge of absolute fiction, and supply instances by which his fabric of fancy would resemble truth !

Mr. Emersly, deprived of his usual society by the absence of his nephew and his friend Richardson, and conceiving it possible that his presence and example might have some good effect on the irregular principles of Sir William and his mother, made frequent visits to Ashbourne Hall; and as he found there a greater degree of attention than he expected, was induced to continue them; but he had yet to know, that their attention was mockery, and his laudable endeavours the subject of it; the inveterate disposition to vice in the Baronet, and the licentious sentiments of his mother, were beyond the influence of either his precept or example.

But as the Baronet founded the success of his scheme in the preservation of a ready reception at his uncle's, and

at Hawthorn, he endeavoured to obtain the confidence of the respective parties, by an appearance of candour and fair intention.

His views at Elderfield were, as they had from the first been, to dissolve the attachment of his uncle to the interests of Mortimer, by representing him not only as the original contriver of the connexion between Ellen and his brother, but as an interested agent facilitating their future correspondence ; and by coinciding with the notions Mr. Emersly had previously adopted on the subject, and assisting him in the suggestion of relative consequences, effected his purpose in a very great degree.

Mr. Emersly knew little more of Mortimer than that he was an embarrassed man ; and though from the pa-

tronage of his deceased brother, he had reason to think him honest, the insinuations of the Baronet led him to doubt his being so, otherwise than as his interest disposed him—the temptation of an establishment so flattering, not only to his daughter's hopes, but to his own advantage, also, Mr. Emersly conceived to be irresistible by a man in Mortimer's situation ; he, therefore, determined to suspend all communication with him, and recommended the same kind of conduct to the Baronet, until time should have rendered his character less dubious—the Baronet promised an implicit obedience to his direction.

At Hawthorn, it may be sufficient to say, he appeared in a character directly opposite.—There he was the friend of Mortimer, for Mortimer's sake

—he was the friend of Ellen, for the sake of his brother—to Mortimer he represented the disregard of his uncle, as the result of a mistaken opinion of him which it was his, (the Baronet's) constant endeavour to remove ; and when Mortimer would entreat an explanation, beg to be excused, and, if farther pressed, would, by hint and hesitation, leave him in that state of conjecture and despondency which excluded all hope of reconciliation by any personal appeal.

Ellen's mind was too much occupied by the absence of her lover, to be alarmed at the absence of Mr. Emersly ; and as the Baronet was the only medium of consolation to her, he had little difficulty in recommending himself to her confidence.

One day, upon her returning with her father from market, whither she had been accustomed to attend him on account of his increasing infirmities, she found on the table a small packet, directed to her, which the servant told her had been sent by Sir William.

Unwilling that her father should know more of their correspondence than she thought might please him, she ran hastily to her chamber with the packet, that she might inform herself privately of its contents; her anxiety outstript her hope, and before she had given herself time to form the wish, she found it anticipated in the following letter from young Emersly ;—

“ DEAR ELLEN,

“ As mutual esteem is the foundation both of friendship and of love, a

series of reciprocated pledges are the essential cement by which these Heaven-raised fabrics are rendered firm and compact.

“ To this proposition you have given prior assent, in the kind favour you so recently conferred on me ; allow me to realize *my* sentiments, by presenting in return the inclosed trifle, and with it my earnest hope, that heaven, inspiring still the cordial spirit of amity, will conduct us through the year (for which this little register is calculated) possessed of the same unallayed affection for each other, that I flatter myself has crowned the commencement of it.

“ The vessel sails to-morrow.

“ Adieu !”

After a third perusal of the letter,

that despondency of mind which the departure of her lover had induced, was in a great degree removed by a comparative consideration of what the letter *did* contain, with what it *might have* contained under circumstances so favourable to apostasy—the style and sentiment were evidently sincere ; and though they could not amount to an assurance beyond her hopes, they were more than adequate to her expectations.—The register alluded to was a neat pocket almanack and book. This part of the present she had thrown aside for the more important letter that accompanied it ; but having impressed her mind with its contents, she opened the book to secrete the letter from her father's notice, and was surprised by the picture of her lover set in gold—

she started back, and returning to a nearer view, acknowledged the excellence of the artist's skill, by a spontaneous effusion of tears—the lineaments were so exactly pourtrayed, and the mental character so visibly expressed in the countenance, that the presence of Henry himself could scarcely have excited a more genuine sympathy in the breast of Ellen—she contemplated every feature, and in the *tout ensemble* recognised a heart worthy of her most ardent hopes.

Her attention, thus occupied by a subject so inexhaustible, had insensibly prolonged her stay so much beyond the time necessary for any ordinary occasion, that her father, somewhat alarmed at having repeatedly summoned her to the parlour in vain, entered her cham-

ber in search of her, as she was musing on the picture. Her father's foot behind her roused her from her pleasing reverie, and she had scarcely time to commit the precious icon to her bosom before he came up to her.

“ Ellen,” said the old man, “ what has detained you so long?—I wanted you to make our neighbour Williams welcome (not his son, for I despair of that*)—it is the first time he has been out since the last attack of his old complaint, and he asked very kindly after you.”

“ I am much obliged to him, Sir—I don't know how it was”——“ But I

* Here Mortimer alluded to Ellen's rejection of some matrimonial overtures made to her by that young man previous to her acquaintance with young Emersly.

do," replied Mortimer; " I can see you have been distressing yourself about something, and I fear—I fear, Ellen, it is about that, which will always be a source of uneasiness to you—why will you continue to foster a passion, a hopeless one, which preys upon your heart, absorbs your spirits, and saps the foundation of your life!"

Mortimer never could remonstrate with Ellen on this disproportioned attachment without tears; he not only saw the baneful operation of its consequences in his daughter, but also felt them in himself—for as his age subjected him to many infirmities, he knew no means of alleviation but in the gentle conduct and kind attention of his child!—and, alas! her attention he now found too much divided by another object, either

to sooth his sorrows, or assist his pains!

Ellen moved by the agitation of her father addressed him in the most affectionate terms; and assuming one of her former smiles, while her eyes glistened with tears, declared her resolution to combat the impetuosity of her passion, and assured him it should never more interrupt the peace of either.

“ I will henceforth, father,” said she, “ devote every minute to your comfort; I will sit with you, and hear your stories of former times—I will sing your battles and emulate your victories by my own.”

The old man's heart flushed with the anticipation of these promised joys, had suggested a blessing on his daughter, with other endearments, when the delivery of them was suddenly suspended

by a summons to the parlour, which he attended, while Ellen remained behind, on pretence of adjusting some affairs in her chamber—in reality, to deposit the pocket-book and picture secretly and safely from her father's view.—That being accomplished, she returned to the parlour, and found her father, who, with a vacant eye bent on the ground, seemed revolving in his mind the contents of a letter which lay open on a table beside him—Ellen glanced at the letter, and knew it to be the hand-writing of the Baronet.

“Any thing new, father?”

“Inform yourself, my child.”

Ellen took up the letter, and read as follows:

“An unlucky turn of fortune has subjected me to a little temporary em-

barrassment, which, as it has, in some degree, involved yourself, I have thought it proper to inform you of—it is, however, nothing more than this—I sometime ago had the misfortune to incur a debt of honour, the consequence of an ill run at play; but as it was with a very familiar acquaintance, I drew on his indulgence for a little time to answer an obligation which I considered myself bound in honour to discharge; a man's honour among gamesters is seldom current in these cases beyond the following day—mine has run nearly three months—this morning the party applied, and in the most pressing terms requested the debt, which was three hundred pounds, might be discharged, as he was himself in a similar condition; in vain I represented my inabi-

lity to discharge a debt of that magnitude during my minority—his honour, his every thing was at stake ; and if he were not enabled, by the discharge of my debt, to discharge his own—he must relinquish a society of which he had been long an honourable member, and be subject to the scorn and contempt of all his former friends—in short, I found myself brought to the necessity of parting with my last guinea, and requesting him to take my note payable to his order, for the rest—this he agreed to ; but, unfortunately, on opening my *escritoir*, your bond met his eye, which he immediately insisted on, as a mode of payment that would save any further trouble, and answer his purpose better—it was to no effect that I assured him I had pledged my

word not to assign it to any other hand—nor was it till after much entreaty that he consented to hold the assignment as collateral security for three months, allowing me that time to redeem it in—but as I have no doubt that time will be sufficient for the purpose, you may consider the contents of this note as mere matter of information.

W. EMERSON.

Ellen laid down the letter—

“ Fresh trouble, Ellen!—Fresh trouble!”

“ I hope not, Sir,—the will and ability of the Baronet can prevent it, and I have no doubt that he will exert them in your favour.”

“ Ah! Heaven help thee, my child—the will and the ability are two very distinct matters.”

“ Well, Sir, adopt my opinion in this case—I think, as Sir William has no doubt of redeeming the bond, there ought to be none with you—treat the affair lightly, Sir—let the worst happen, it needs not kill us these three months.”

Mortimer sighed—Ellen laid her arm on his shoulder—looked in his face—and smiling—

“ Come, come, father,” said she, “ we shall yet live to see many happy days contrasted with the present.”

Mortimer took the hand she offered—

“ You are young, my child—Heaven grant you may—they will come too late for me !”

Had this circumstance happened a few months before, Ellen would then have dreaded the consequences of it, as

much as her father did now, but she had too great an interest in the sincerity of the Baronet's professions, to subject herself to the misery of a moment's doubt—so much was her happiness in his power, that to have conceived him otherwise than her friend must have been fatal to her dearest hopes.

But Mortimer's age, with the jealous solicitude which is invariably attached to it, was an insuperable barrier to the consolatory effects of his daughter's arguments, which though urged with every advantage that the most sincere affection could suggest, failed in the pious purpose of them, and only added to the apprehensions of his own ruin, that of beholding so much virtue the future prey of want!

The next morning Mortimer, whose anxiety had deprived him of rest the whole of the preceding night, finding it too much for him to contend with any longer, set out for Ashbourne Hall, hoping to derive some better ground of hope than either the suggestions of his daughter, or the vague intimation of the Baronet's letter had afforded.

In his way he met George, Lady Emersly's coachman.

"Ah, Master Mortimer," said George
"where are *you* travelling?"

"I want to see the Baronet, George—shall I find him at home?"

"I believe you may," replied George—
—"Well, and how do you hold it?—and how is Miss Ellen?—she grows a fine lass; I suppose you will be getting her off your hands soon."

“ Ay, George—or she will be getting me off hers—which I believe is more likely at present.”

“ Well, well, Master Mortimer, we have had our time, we have had our days,—and now and then a happy one—I suppose you have heard that poor Sam, the porter, is gone.”

“ Gone?—what, dead?”

“ Oh, no—poor old fellow, worse than that—turned off in his old days, to seek a new place!”

“ Why, he has been there many years, George—I think I can remember him there these eighteen years.”

“ Ah!” replied George, “ and I thirty years! and he was there ten years before I knew him—he has been forty years in the family, and is seventy-two years old.”

say or do—it is enough for him to think of his pleasures; and as he has always been suffered to do as he pleases, every one else may do the same, for any thing he cares—whatever he wants, he orders and has—what he may do when he comes of age I can't tell; but between you and I, Master Mortimer, there is but a gloomy prospect at Ashbourne—there is one Sedley, he calls himself a captain, but I knew him when he was a lawyer—however, let him be what he will, I believe he is no better then he should be.”

“What, George,” said Mortimer, “do you know any thing of Captain Sedley?”

“I know enough of him to know that he will never do my young master any good by his company—why he is a

gambler, and that is enough for me—besides, I know he has no money of his own to gamble with ; and tell me, Master Mortimer, the difference between such a man and a thief,”

“ Oh George, not so bad as that—he has, perhaps, had luck on his side.”

“ Ay, he has, or he would not have escaped the gallows so long—one must not say all one knows, or—well, Heaven help the poor that can’t help themselves—so good day to you—I am going now to my old master’s brother at Elderfield.”

“ How is that worthy gentleman?” said Mortimer.

“ Why I think,” replied George, “ he is like you and I—a good deal worse for wear—and ever since Master Henry left him, he seems to have had

something on his mind that troubles him.—Poor gentleman! I never see him, but he puts me in mind of old Sir William; he has just that kind manner of speaking, that makes it a pleasure to obey his orders—die when he will, Master Mortimer—if the prayers of the poor prevail, he will have a blessed hereafter!—there is not a cottage in the district that is not cheered at his presence.”

Mortimer assented heartily to George’s account of Mr. Emersly’s benevolence; and, wishing him good morning, silently lamented that he was no longer an object of it!

The reflections consequent to that consideration were particularly irksome to Mortimer, whose high sense of honour could ill brook the construction

of his conduct into that of a mercenary match-maker; the obloquy that the propagation of such an opinion would indelibly attach to his character, gave him frequent cause of uneasiness, and had determined him to a future explanation with Mr. Emersly on the subject, but which the artful suggestions of the Baronet had hitherto prevented.

Mortimer was received by Sir William with a degree of frankness which not only gave him confidence in his address but also caused a temporary rejection of those sentiments which had arisen in his mind, concerning him, from George's account of things.

The ease and gaiety of heart which appeared in the Baronet were premises which led to a false conclusion in the

mind of Mortimer, whose acquaintance with the dark side of the human character, having been principally confined to rascals of a lower sphere, who bore their character in their countenance, was inadequate to the penetration of that *mystic* character that “can smile and smile, and be a villain.”

After preluding the subject with an apology for his intrusion, Mortimer informed the Baronet, that his apprehensions of what might happen in consequence of the bond being placed in other hands had induced him to request a personal interview with him; which having been so readily granted, he trusted the purpose of his journey would be as readily answered by a more confirmed assurance of indemnity, should the condition of the bond be

enforced—"My utter inability," concluded Mortimer, "to answer such a demand, would be an unnecessary plea to you, Sir William, who are so well aware of it; but let me bring to your consideration also my old age and the unprovided condition of my daughter."

"I understand you," interrupted the Baronet, "and have considered both—your age, ill calculated to contend with such difficulties, would probably find its termination in their approach; while the forlorn condition of your daughter, demanding immediate relief, might reduce her to the adoption of means somewhat incompatible with the moral documents she has received from you."

An involuntary emotion in Mortimer prevented the Baronet from proceeding

in a representation so consonant with his real intentions, and with an address that might have duped as great a villain as himself, on any ordinary occasion—"Confirmed in this opinion of its consequences, my worthy friend," said he, "can you for a moment suppose that I would suffer them to be realized for the paltry consideration of your bond—assure yourself, Mortimer, that the bond shall be redeemed by the same hand that pledged it."

Mortimer, alarmed by the former part of the Baronet's conversation, and perplexed by the close of it, sat for some minutes in silent expectation of something more explicit—five minutes silence is an awkward chasm in a conversation of such a nature—ten had passed, and the Baronet resorted to

effrontery for that support which the jealous silence of Mortimer rendered necessary to the dignity of a titled scoundrel; he rang the bell and imperiously ordering the servant's attendance to dress, at the same time desired him to attend Mortimer to the gate.

A great man's frown is an unanswerable argument to a poor man's remonstrance; Mortimer in attempting to renew the subject, found it to, and submitted to its negative decision.

CHAP. VII.



MORTIMER's despondency daily increased, notwithstanding the endeavours of Ellen to cheer him with the hopes of better times, of which she herself felt confident from the steady attachment of young Emersly; as even the aversion of his uncle could not deprive him of an easy independency secured to him by his father's will; and although it might be considerably augmented by the favour of his uncle, still there was enough for real happiness to those so predisposed for it—but as Mortimer could never hear of the connexion without associating the

idea of its consequences in the loss of that gentleman's friendship and good opinion, he always opposed the subject with the most pointed disapprobation; and as Ellen was consequently obliged to reserve the reasons on which her hopes were founded, they were mere assertion to Mortimer, and received only as an indication of her wish to comfort him. — Her cheerfulness which was partly assumed, and partly the result of her lover's attention, would sometimes remove the gloom of apprehension from his brow, while a song never failed to cause a temporary truce to thought; her exertions were thus not wholly fruitless; but these oblivious intervals were always succeeded by an increased dejection, which affected his health in an alarming degree.

One day, as Ellen was remonstrating with her father on the necessity of patience under evils which cannot be avoided, and was exerting her engaging powers to arrest the progress of melancholy, a servant from the Baronet brought a letter, which Mortimer took up, and was about to open; when Ellen, seeing the address, cried out, "It is to me, father!"

"To you, my child?" replied Mortimer; "what business can the Baronet have with you?"

"Indeed, father, it is to me."

"Stop, child, let me put on my spectacles—Hey—sure enough it is directed to you."

Ellen broke open the letter; and as she knew her father would expect to be satisfied with regard to the *who* and the

what—she first perused, and then selected from its contents such parts as might satisfy her father's curiosity without betraying the cause of love.

The letter *in toto* was as follows: the parts omitted by Ellen will need no other index than the reader's judgment.

“MY EVER DEAR AND AMIABLE ELLEN!

“ (Or if in the copious catalogue of tender appellations there are those more expressive of affection, it is by those I would address you.)

“ Without society in the midst of friends—with every thing around me that can engage a heart not pre-engaged by love, I seek retirement to think on you—to think? rather to indulge a thought inseparable from my

mind—to revel in ideal bliss—and yield to fancied raptures all my soul!

“ We arrived at Alicant three days previous to the date of this, and were received by Mr. Richardson’s friend with every demonstration of respect (for I find it is to a friend of Mr. Richardson’s I have been *consigned*—his disposition *seems* to be frank and easy—what it *really* is, time will shew. I have been introduced to a variety of characters, which, had my mind been at liberty to expatiate, would have afforded ample subject for censure and for praise—but I have not yet had time or leisure to form a just opinion of the country or people—should the nature of my avocations be questionable to you, consult your mirror, and consider the irresistible interest attached to

the lovely object it presents. And does her Henry ever occupy his Ellen's thoughts?—and do her secret sighs reciprocate his own—or sympathy inform her breast with correspondent passion?—then may she conceive, what language can't express—or pen describe—her Henry's love.

“Mr. Richardson's return, which will be almost immediately, may be the means of conveying to you another packet, better stored with information.”

Mortimer listened to Ellen's account of the letter; which having given, with a little necessary invention—

“Father,” said she, “are the Spaniards a civil and courteous people?”

“I found them child as I have found

many other people, very civil when pleased, and very sulky when otherwise."

"But I have heard that they are very revengeful—that on the slightest grounds they will conceive themselves injured, and that nothing but the blood of the person can appease them."

"That has been said to be a part of the national character; but there are, no doubt, many among them whose disposition and manners are as exemplary as the best among ourselves—what will not some Englishmen do to avenge what they suppose an injury—is not a word—a look—an offence that demands the blood of the offender?"

"Still, father, there is something generous in an *open* resentment, however unwarrantable it may be in other re-

spects; but I have read, that in Spain they stab in the dark, and hire people to way-lay the object of their vengeance—Oh! my blood runs cold when I think of it!”

“ *Your* blood, Ellen? how can your blood be affected by Spanish bravoës?”

“ I don’t know, father—there is something so shocking in the idea, that I never can endure it.”

“ Then the best way, Ellen, to avoid any trouble from that idea, is, to forget Spain, and all who are in it.”

This admonition was accompanied with an emphasis that could not be mistaken.—Ellen blushed, and was silent; and Mortimer, unwilling to add to her embarrassment by his presence, left the room.

Although the credibility of the Baronet's professions had sunk materially in the mind of Mortimer, in Ellen's it remained with all the stability of an interested prejudice—Mortimer's doubts were constantly opposed by an appeal to the word and honour of Sir William, both which, in Mortimer's estimation, were of trifling account; indeed, he sometimes considered them not merely nugatory, but pledged with worse intention, and that his apprehensions might be as well founded with respect to the Baronet as to the person to whom the bond was assigned, which, as yet, he knew not to be *Sedley*—but as Ellen's opinion differed so much from his own in the favourable construction of the Baronet's promises, he hesitated to assert positively what might

induce her to doubt not only his judgment, but his charity.

With this difference of opinion Ellen countenanced the attentions of the Baronet, and clandestinely accompanied him in his morning walks, during her father's absence in the grounds.

In one of these excursions, the Baronet had contrived to amuse her with a conversation, of which his brother was the subject, and had led her far enough from home for the prosecution of his purpose, when they were met by Sedley, who, with all the freedom of a friend, turned about, joined company, and entered into conversation; which now taking a more desultory turn, disengaged Ellen's mind from an interest that had biassed it from home much beyond the timely consideration of her

return—she became anxious—and her anxiety was much increased by the horizon being suddenly overcast—the wind began to whistle through the leaves—the birds flew to their nests—and every thing indicated an approaching storm—the necessity of an immediate shelter now superseded every other consideration; and Sedley informing them that he had passed a house that would receive them at the distance of about a quarter of a mile, they hastened to the place, and reached it just before the storm began.

They were shewn into a little parlour, where sat a decently dressed man smoking his pipe, with a mug of ale beside him—at their entrance he shifted his seat, and Ellen being placed between Sedley and the Baronet, the landlord

was desired to produce some wine; but as nothing better than ale was to be had, some of the best was ordered and brought.

They were scarcely seated when an elderly gentleman, who, by his habit, appeared to be a clergyman, entered the room, and took a seat opposite; and having called for a pipe, and some ale, paid his respects—observing that he had hastened to avoid the storm, which had just fallen without doors as he got within—then lighting his pipe, after a silence of some minutes, he was addressed by the before-mentioned stranger, with,

“ Well, friend Wilkinson! what do you think of our President’s letter?—we are to have another meeting soon.”

“Another meeting, are you?” replied the gentleman in black. “I should think farthest from such a president best; he is endeavouring to deprive you of those sentiments, which can alone make you happy in yourself, and respected by others.”

“Ah! friend Wilkinson, how much you are mistaken,” replied the other; “why ever since I laid aside the shackles of priestcraft, I have felt myself quite a different man—quite free—can enjoy life when and how I like—happiness is all before me, and I have only to choose and change the mode of it—why, as our president says, do you think nature gave us faculties, capabilities of pleasure, and forbad us the use of them?—and then, as to another

world, and judgment, and hell, and all that nonsense—why we don't believe a word of it."

"My friend," replied the old gentleman, "I fear you do not clearly understand what *is* happiness, by your using pleasure and *it* as synonymous terms—there is certainly no happiness without pleasure, but there may be much pleasure without a degree of happiness—the one is transitory, the other lasting—the one results from the *use* of those faculties you speak of, the other is sought in the *abuse* of them—as to your disbelief of a future state and retribution, your assertion rather argues that you *fear*, than that you *disbelieve*—for what can there be objectionable to the belief of a future state, or retribution, to those who are not

conscious of a voluntary course of guilt?"

"And so you expect to smoke your pipe in another world old boy?" interrupted Sedley.

"Sir," replied the old gentleman, "my discourse was not directed to you; and I must say, your observation is not only impertinent but impudent; you are a stranger to me; but whoever you are, I will tell you, that your manners by no means correspond with your appearance, nor your notion of a future state with the education of a gentleman."

The Baronet now interfered, and, with all the semblance of sincerity, requested that the conduct of his friend might be imputed to a light turn of mind, which he had endeavoured to

correct; but failing in proper argument, his endeavours had been hitherto fruitless.

“ I presume, Sir,” continued he, “ that you are a clergyman, and in the course of your studies must have acquired a fund of theological information which I want. Of this deficiency he avails himself, and, instead of being convinced by my arguments, puzzles me with his own—could his inveterate disbelief of the soul’s immortality be obviated by a logical appeal to his reason, it would be the ground-work of his conversion to Christianity.”

“ Sir,” replied the gentleman, “ my profession requires that I assist the cause of Christianity with all the ability I possess; but before I enter on so serious a subject with a perfect stran-

ger, and, by your own confession, a man of levity, I should be assured that he is seriously disposed to accept what I have to offer."

Sedley arose from his seat, and, with an affected gravity, "Sir," said he, "you may rely on my inclination to be informed by your superior wisdom, and corrected by your counsel."

"Well, Sir," replied the clergyman, "you have assured me that you are serious, and I have no right to disbelieve you:" then laying down his pipe he addressed him in the following words:

"On a subject like this, which has ever been, and ever will be, too deep for human demonstration"——

"There," interrupted Sedley, "you may shut up the book, Doctor; I am

perfectly of your way of thinking, that nobody ever did, or can, know any thing at all about it."

"Sir," said the clergyman, "you interrupt me by a very hasty conclusion—I meant to say, that though the immortality of the soul will not admit of direct proof by human argument, yet by a strenuous collision between the mind and the subject, we may obtain a spark of illustration to *enlighten* our faith, if not the full blaze of evidence to *annul* it."

"But having no faith to be enlightened, Doctor, your time and trouble will be thrown away, unless I am perfectly convinced."

"Sir," replied the clergyman, "do you believe in a God?"

"Most certainly—come, come, Doc-

tor, a little more candour than to suppose me an atheist."

"Sir, a modern deist is little better—your faith, I presume, will extend to the *ability* of the Creator to bestow immortality on man, though not the *will*—then must he have given to him an excellence in what we term parental affection. Who amongst us would not perpetuate the existence of his offspring if he could, and could make it happy?"

"Well said, Doctor!"

"Sir, I don't know that it is so well said; but if you comprehend the meaning of my argument, and it appear as cogent to you as it does to me, it will tend in no small degree to your conviction."

"Pray, Sir, proceed," said the Baro-

net; “ your reflections are very pertinent, and very just.”

“ Sir continued the clergyman, who seemed to warm with his subject, “ I have made many, and will briefly state to you the result of them.

The human soul incarnate yet divine is placed in a state of probation in this material world—with material organs for the exertion and improvement of its powers, by an humble contemplation of the works of its great Creator, and a grateful and implicit obedience to his will.

But the antemundane defection, as we are taught, having introduced a species of malign beings, whose operations in the heart of man have sullied its original purity—”

“ Now, Doctor, you are going to preach,” interrupted Sedley.

“ Sir, the immortality of the soul is so immediately connected with the revelation of its Creator, that the belief of it never was, nor ever can be, confirmed, but on that sacred basis—therefore, unless I am allowed to argue *ad verbum Dei*, my reasoning and your belief will be equally groundless.”

“ Well, Doctor, suppose I grant you the soul immortal — where will you place her when the body falls?”

“ Isaiah answers that question in the most explicit manner: he says, ‘ there shall be a new heaven and a new earth.’ ”

“ I have always thought that a very confined idea, Doctor—now I should rather suppose that the immortal soul will expatiate unlimited in the vast immensity of space.”

“ The Prophet’s *idea*, as you term it,

is much more rational—there is but *One* whose powers are infinite—those of man or angel must be limited, consequently, their objects must be subject to limitation—thus locality becomes necessary to created beings on account of their finite powers, and the belief of a new heaven and a new earth founded alike on reason and revelation.”

The entrance of a person with much self-importance in his air, and smoothness of address, interrupted the conversation—with whom the clergyman’s friend, starting up, shook hands—and having placed him in a seat beside him,

“ Well, Mr. Hellebore, and how are you?” said he. “ This is our President, friend Wilkinson.”

“My dear friend,” said Mr. President, “how can you mistake so—Wellebore is my name.”

“Oh! dear, now, I am so forgetful—it was just so the other day, when I wanted to tell my friend Wilkinson of that excellent discourse—you know what—the—you know you said as how you met a physician, a very learned man, and *he* told *you*”—

“Physician? Physician? Oh, my dear friend, you have the most unfortunate talent at misapprehension in some things, to be sure—no, no, I was telling you of a *metaphysician*, a very learned man, whose name I had forgotten, and was explaining to you the nature of the human soul agreeably to his theory—of its substance, its faculties, &c,—and all to divest you,

my dear friend, of the many ridiculous fears you have of punishment in a future state.”

“ Ay, so you did, so you did—Oh, I am quite another man, I assure you—I always laugh at my friend Wilkinson, when I hear him on the old story, you know—Hey—Ha! ha! ha!—Ah, Mr. Hell—Wellebore, I mean; if you would now but take him in hand—a few of your looks and braytions*—Hey, Mister—I fancy they would make

* It is presumed the author has here an allusion to the use of those high-sounding words by which the artful so often impose on the ignorant—and that *Mr. President* had been in the habit of talking of his *lucubrations*—a word which ignorance might easily report on an after-day as above stated—and *aptly* enough, when the qualifications of many a *modern philosopher* are considered.

an alteration in him—a good kind of man, I assure you—a very good kind of man, but rather—you understand me.”

“Pray, Sir,” said Mr. President, pulling up his cravat, and addressing the old gentleman with all the pertness of ignorance, “have you any objection to a set-to in our way?”

“Indeed, Sir, replied the clergyman, “I am as yet a stranger to your way, and therefore cannot precisely answer.”

“Well, Sir, what say you to the *Miracles*—I suppose you will allow that ‘*Nothing can act where it is not*’—you grant me that.”

“Yes, Sir, I think I may.”

“Ah, friend Wilkinson,” said Wiseacre, knocking the ashes out of his pipe

—“ what, you have got your match now, hey?”

“ You admit the truth of my position, Sir?”

“ The position you have *adopted*, Sir, I presume.”

“ Hey?—ay, ay, certainly, certainly—yes, yes— Well, Sir, then having granted me that—why then you know—bless me—what was I going to say—do you remember, Mister, the other night, how I di-lated upon the subject—but some how, I have lost my *concat-enation*.”

Mr. President having lost his concatenation—Sedley, as a philosopher of the same school, having first, by the wink of his eye, obtained permission—resumed *his* amusement—

“ Doctor,” said he, “ when I went to

school, they told me that two and one made three; but when I went to church, they told me that three made one—now I ask you, as a reasonable man, do you believe it?”

The clergyman's *knowing* friend gave a nod of assent to Sedley's implied incredulity, and was about to speak—when, laying down his pipe, “Sir,” said the clergyman, “presuming you allude to the doctrinal Trinity—*Yes*—most certainly; tho' not so much as a *reasonable man*, as (I humbly presume) a *faithful christian*.—Human reason, Sir, is the gradual result of human experience and observation, and can never be the means of ascertaining, definitively, the existence or non-existence of things super-extraneous to it—that there is a God we know, but the mode

of his existence we cannot know—his Tri-unity has been revealed to us in terms best adapted to our comprehension, Ἀνθρωπίνως, δια ασθενίαν τῆς σαρκὸς ἡμῶν, but still as an object of faith, not demonstration, a more explicit revelation, if ever possible, does not appear necessary either to our happiness or our duty here—but, Sir, it is not religion only that has its mysteries—we are surrounded by them—if we reason deeply, we find cause to believe that nothing is *really* as it *appears* to be:—The curiosity of mankind has led to the analysis of matter in its various modifications, and to the contemplation of it in the abstract—the former investigation has, indeed, been highly useful in its results—but the latter has been productive of many wild theories,

and system has followed system of illusive conjecture and vain conclusion—terms have been invented for what could not be found (its *abstract reality*), which convey no information—for what can possibly be understood by their *atoms*, but that matter is matter, and an atom the smallest imaginable particle of it—what by their διαστατον αντιτυπον, their ὕλη πρώτη καὶ προσειχῆς, their *substratum, attraction and repulsion*, and the long list of terms equally dark—but that they are terms for which the Christian philosopher would more rationally substitute the *Deus dixit*, or δύναμις τῆς Θεοῦ—a power which can never be comprehended but in its *effects*—But, Sir, I fear, judging of facts by their consequences, that the philosophers of the *modern* school, while oc-

cupied with all the pride of false philosophy, in inventing, contemplating, and systematizing their *secondary* causes, have forgotten the Omnipotent FIRST! it is too certain that their disciples, with weaker heads and probably worse hearts, are spreading far and wide, and promulgating a *practical* comment on their latitudinary doctrines!—Of Nothing, (Ἐξωθεν) He created all things—He said *let it be!*—and *it was!*—HE the sole self-existent ENS—the Almighty, Infinite, and Incomprehensible MONON—We but the creatures of his power—the whole creation but the ideas of the Deity realized to human sense as the means of human happiness, and for the eviction of his Glory!—I will not enter on the fall of man, by which he is become so imperfectly qualified to avail

himself of these glorious means—but we are still the creatures of his power, whose duty is humble adoration—and whose true enjoyment is—His favour: we are, indeed, more; for *ἐλάβομεν πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας ἐν ᾧ κράζομεν, Ἀββᾶ ὁ πατήρ* and *ἡ ἀποκαραδοκία τῆς κλίσεως τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν τῶν υἱῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀπεκδέχεται.*” Rom. vii. 15. 19.

CHAP. VIII.



THE honest fervour and emotion of the Clergyman evinced him a worthy member of his profession—from the commencement of his reply, he had gradually and insensibly become wrapt in the contemplation of his sublime subject, which was certainly beyond the comprehension of his company, had it been attentive—but, turning his head, he found Mr. President had slipped away (in fact, to where he was more likely to do *business*!)—his friend was nodding over his pipe, or pretending to nod—Sedley and the Baronet

were awake, but worse employed—while Ellen, though she could not understand the style of his discourse, had her eyes fixed on the old gentleman with respectful attention to its piety—nor was her attention unrewarded—the clergyman paused at the very instant of mischief—while his sudden observation was immediately answered by Sedley with the exclamation of—

“ Well said Doctor !—very well said—very well said indeed—and so, Doctor—it is your opinion—that—Miss Mortimer, here’s the glass at your service.”

“ Sir,” exclaimed the Clergyman, with much warmth, “ it is my opinion that you are a scoundrel.—Madam, as you value your safety, decline the glass.”

“What!” cried the Baronet, starting up.

“I say, Sir, ’tis unmanly to spice a lady’s cup—I saw it done—and I suspect foul play.”

“What do you say, Sir?” cried Sedley.

“I say, Sir, you are a villain—resent it as you please.”

“A d——d old fool—Ha! ha! ha!—a bit of nutmeg to warm the lady’s stomach.”

“Where is it, Sir?” said the Clergyman “Nutmeg does not usually disappear so soon.”

“Ay, Sir,” cried the Baronet, convinced the scheme had failed, “Where is it?—What is it?—or what did you mean by it?”

“Oh! Sir William,” cried Ellen, “I entreat you—conduct me home.”

“Why, Sir William,” pretended Sedley, “you can’t be serious—so far from intending any harm to the lady, it was meant to counteract the severity of the weather on her return home.”

“Then pray, Sir,” said the Clergyman, “avail yourself of the benefit, and exonerate your character from the suspicion of the company.”

The baronet, now thinking it time to dismiss him, insisted on his quitting the house ; while Sedley, courting compulsion, led his employer to the outer gate, where, having d——d the parson, and laughed at the sport, they appointed a meeting at Ashbourne the next day, to substitute for this failure a scheme less liable to fail.

Ellen had just been recovered from a swoon, into which the agitation of her mind had thrown her, by the Clergy-

man and his friend, when her pretended champion returned.

“ I cannot conceive,” said he, taking up the glass, and throwing the contents into the fire, “ what the scoundrel could have put into the liquor, or for what purpose.”

“ I have heard, Sir,” said the Clergyman, “ of opiates, philters of various kinds, used for purposes of the blackest dye.”

“ Or whether,” interrupted the Baronet, “ was it really as he said—for were I sure that he had intended an injury of that kind to this lady, whose protection I conceive myself engaged for, I would immediately demand such satisfaction as the nature of the offence requires.”

“ The nature of the offence,” ex-

claimed the Clergyman, with an impassioned warmth, “justly merits the death of the offender.—My poor Eliza!—excuse my tears, Sir—I cannot forget that I had a daughter!—She was my only child, and, by a stratagem not unlike what I suspected here, was ruined, hapless girl! at a time when the world could not have produced a fairer candidate for heaven!—Possessed of every natural grace, I had placed her in the peaceful path of virtue, and was flattered by each day’s progress to perfection, when the cruel spoiler came, and blasted all my hopes!

“ He was captain in a regiment quartered in the town, and had been introduced to my family by a trifling act of politeness to my daughter, one Sunday, at church; what it was, does not now

occur to me ; but as gentlemen of his description, if strangers in a country town, have their society to seek, he was received as much on that account as the other.

“ He had not long availed himself of our hospitality, when I observed his attentions to my daughter become particularly sedulous, and, at times, rather more ardent than I conceived the rules of ordinary politeness required ; but as we found the respectability of his family known to others, and his behaviour to my daughter within the bounds of decorum, I was induced, at the instance of my wife, to give it my countenance.

“ The connexion went on in this way for some time, and now and then hints of marriage were dropped ; our

confidence in his honour increased, and a prospect of the comfortable settlement of our child opened our hearts and hands in the entertainment of him, and he partook with us as freely as we offered—when, one day, we were informed, that the regiment was about to break up its quarters for a distant part of the country, if not for foreign service.

“ I was somewhat surprised that the first intelligence of this had not come from him ; and still more so, when, on my mentioning it, he confirmed the truth of it, with the utmost indifference. My expectations were disappointed—but I was more concerned for the distress it might occasion to my daughter, whom I had for some days observed to be more than usually thoughtful.

“ On the day of his departure, he insisted on taking a parting glass with us, although I had, from the time it was intimated, treated him with a degree of coolness bordering on reproof.

“ I would gladly have resented what I conceived to be an unfair desertion of my daughter, by a positive denial ; but my wife, unwilling to give him a plea for doing what was so obviously intended, advised me to receive him—to be short, he was received, and, by me, with a welcome as insincere as I suspected his pretensions to be.

“ You may suppose, Sir, there could be little enjoyment, where disgust on one side, and design on the other, prevented the free communication of our minds—My wife was anxious, and my daughter thoughtful—while Neville

(for that was the villain's name) amused them with repeated assurances of honour and fidelity, and me with apologies for not doing what he, by implication, stood engaged to do previous to his departure.

“ He left us, however, with such solemn promises, that my wife went satisfied to bed, and I with something like confidence in his assurances—my daughter had still appeared thoughtful, and, when spoken to, looked us in the face without answering—all which I thought accounted for, by her separation from the man she loved.

“ I had said little to her on the subject that night, intending the next morning to offer such advice as I conceived most likely to tranquilize her mind ; but conceive, if it be possible, our sur-

prise, when in the morning, we found that she had eloped with him!

“ She had left a note in her bed-chamber, in which she attempted to apologize for her conduct, by declaring that she could not live without him; that, though clandestinely, she accompanied him with honourable views (alas, poor girl! I did not then know that she could not look back for them!); that her only reason for not asking my consent was, her despair of obtaining it; and that, as she was determined to follow her own inclination, it would have been a mockery, with that disposition, to consider mine.

“ In the heat of my anger which naturally arose on the determined disobedience of a daughter, to whose comforts and welfare I had devoted my

whole care and attention, I resolved to leave her to her choice, and endeavour to forget I ever had one—it was a vain attempt—Indignation and sorrow alternately possessed my soul—one minute I was ready to curse her impiety—the next, to pity her inexperienced youth—while revenge suggested deeds of horror on the villain who had seduced her.

“ In this intemperate state of mind, no steady resolution could be formed—I would follow him—but where? I had been told the destination of the regiment, but it was not likely to be accompanied by a robber of this description—but he must join it there—When?—when the mischief was done! when either the dishonoured daughter must deny her father—or the perjured

villain contemptuously renounce them both!—add to these objections, that my duty (for I am but a curate, Sir,) would not allow me an absence equal to the pursuit of such determined fugitives.

“ My wife was as ill conditioned to advise as myself—her grief was more silent, but it rendered her mind as incapable of counsel, as was my own—indeed, it principally operated in reflections on herself, attributing to her own short-sighted partiality for Neville her daughter’s predilection and my consent.

“ In this state of hesitation and anxiety a whole month had elapsed, when, returning one Sunday from my duty, I was surprised by the application of an object whose appearance had every claim to pity that poverty and age could

give it. With an ear accustomed to distress, and at that time, with a heart no longer a stranger to it, I listened to her tale, which, from its incoherency, was, for some time, unintelligible; but at last amounted to a request, that I would accompany her to a distant cottage, and administer consolation by sacrament and prayer to a person dangerously ill.

“ I followed the woman, and, entering the place, saw, stretched on a bed of straw—my wretched daughter !

“ I will not attempt to describe my sensations—though they vibrate now—for some minutes I was deprived of my utterance—when seeing me in that absorbed state, and doubting whether to attribute it to surprise or indignation, with a convulsive start she seized my

hand, and, bursting into tears, implored my forgiveness.—This roused the father in me—and my heart, pierced by her penitent appeal—bled for her sufferings, and forgave her crime.

“Encouraged by this kind reception, she, the next day, told us a tale which no parent could relate whose daughter had been the wretched subject—let it suffice to say, the plausible villain had accomplished his purpose by the basest means—and afterwards resigned her to all the horrors of impending infamy.

“Not daring to appear before her incensed parents, and abandoned by the villain she had too fondly loved, she had wandered from place to place, subsisting on the little means she had been accustomed to receive from us for purposes that differed far from those

of dire necessity. These expended, her resolution was—to die!—but the calls of Nature will be heard—Death comes with triple terrors to the guilty—her resolution failed—and she was induced to ask the charity I relieved her from!”

Here the old man’s grief broke in upon his tale, and excited in the gentle breast of Ellen a sigh of pity for his sorrow.

“ Was she your only daughter, Sir?”

“ My only child, Madam.”

“ And did he never after renew the correspondence in an honourable way?”

“ Her only correspondence, Madam, after that which ruined her, was with a broken and contrite heart—which shortly terminating in death—left me—alas ! too sensible of the nature of *Seduction*!”

Had the mind of the Baronet been at all susceptible of shame, the recital of this story might have supplied it with an ample portion; but villany is callous to so fine a sense, and scorns the intrusion of so mild a monitor—the fictitious sympathy of the hypocrite was more congenial with his nature, and more suitable to his nefarious purpose—to the confirmed villain, example is less a warning than a stimulus to bolder crimes!

The interruption of the landlord, who announced fair weather, prevented the course of certain comments which the Curate's deistical friend was beginning to make in favour of moral liberty, and the consequences of what he termed confined notions respecting the connexion of the sexes, which, as

in many others, so in this instance, he conceived had prevented an happy union of the parties, though it might not have been what is termed legal—the sanction of the church he thought very immaterial to their happiness, whose love, while it lasted, would have been a sufficient bond, and without it he thought separation most eligible.

This opinion met the Baronet's assent, and the Curate's serious objection; and would, probably, have produced some warm altercation between the Curate and his friend, had not Ellen, to whom such tenets were not only strange but detestable, availed herself of the landlord's interruption to request the Baronet would conduct her home, who acceding to her anxious solicitation, only because that part

of his scheme had failed for which he had occasioned her absence, she took a grateful leave of the Curate; and the Baronet, thanking him for his company, sneered at his weakness; in which sneer being joined by the Curate's deistical friend, they assumed all that fancied superiority which the world allows to the audacity of its mistaken votaries.

END OF VOL. I.

